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ABSTRACT

This resource book is intended to assist colleges and universities in developing literacy action programs to serve their communities. The following topics are covered: definitions of literacy and types of learners and programs; steps in starting a program (planning, first steps, and first meetings); guidelines for working with learners, community literacy programs, and other community agencies and organizations; program ideas for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and the community at large; procedures for obtaining credit for course work and independent study; student recruitment and program promotion; training and supervision; fund development (government, foundations and corporations, business, the host institution, and direct fundraising); and program profiles of Boston University, Brevard Community College, Macalester College, Mary Baldwin College, Northwestern University, State University of New York at Oswego, Rice University, Seattle University, Stanford University, University of Pennsylvania, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), and Yale University. The following five papers are also included: "Fifteen Myths about Illiterate America" (Kozol); "L.V.A. Conference" (Arrindell); "Keeping Up in America" (Harman); "Teaching Is Remembering" (Holtzman); and "Four Poets: Modern Poetry in the Adult Literacy Classroom" (Kazemek and Rigg). Lists of resources and contact persons and a bibliography are also provided. (MN)

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A Resource Book For Colleges and Universities

by Louisa B. Meacham
of the Campus Outreach Opportunity League

with
Beverly Schwartzberg
of Campus Compact:
The Project for Public and Community Service

made possible by a grant from ACTION/VISTA

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Literacy Action

A Resource Book for Colleges and Universities

Literacy: An Overview

Starting a Program

Working With the Community

Taking Action

Literacy and Learning: Obtaining Academic Credit

Recruiting and Promotion

Training and Supervision

Fund Development

Program Profiles

Issues

Resources and Contacts

First Edition

by Louisa B. Meacham, COOL
with Beverly Schwartzberg, Campus Compact

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LITERACY ACTION:
A RESOURCE BOOK FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

To
Sandra Fuller Barlow,
Jamie Forgione
and
Paul Movsesian

I'd like to learn the word "respect" and the word "dignity".

Jamie, age 23

Somerville, New Jersey
December 1985

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INTRODUCTION 1

Introduction

This resource and information guide is written for students, faculty, administrators, and staff at colleges and universities who are interested in getting involved in literacy work. Literacy, broadly defined as "the ability to read and write," has come prominently into the public eye in the 1980s. Television ads, posters, books, reports, studies, and findings all tell us that there is a "literacy crisis" in America. Numbers ranging from 13 million to 27 to even 60 million are cited when identifying the number of adults in the United States who are illiterate or functionally illiterate. While there is debate about the exact number of illiterate Americans, and even confusion about what it means to be literate in our society, there is no question that there are large numbers of people in the United States who cannot read and need help.

There are large numbers of people in the United States who cannot read and need help.

Purpose of the book

This guide, prepared by the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) in conjunction with the Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service, is an attempt to help those of you at colleges and universities—students, faculty, administrators and staff—who are concerned about men and women struggling to function in a world that demands literacy of its people. Although this book gives primary emphasis to adult literacy programs, working with children and teenagers is a fundamental part of any community literacy effort. The purpose of this book is to help develop and maintain strong programs which join college and university communities with local literacy efforts. Strong programs promote an awareness of the literacy problem in the United States, work to meet the self-determined needs of learners and, where possible, link to other commmunity service programs already in place on campus and in the local community.

The purpose of this book is to help develop and maintain strong programs which join colleges and universities with local literacy efforts.

What are COOL and Campus Compact?

The Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) is a national, nonprofit organization which promotes and supports student involvement in addressing community needs. COOL's national network includes over 400 campuses and 150 national, state, and local organizations. In addition to direct on-campus outreach work, COOL has developed resources to help build stronger, more comprehensive student community service programs. COOL's staff of recent college graduates provide services which include: on-site technical assistance, peer consulting, a newsletter and resource book, state, regional and national conferences, and research on issues like the environment and literacy.

Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service is a coalition of college and university presidents established to create public service opportunities for their students and to develop an expectation of service as an integral part of student life and the college experience. The staff of Campus Compact provides resources and technical assistance to help implement and expand service programs. These services include: regional workshops, site visits to campuses, a newsletter, and a clearinghouse of collegiate community service programs and institutional policies. Campus Compact members pursue federal and state policy that encourages student involvement in public service activity. Members also promote public awareness about the value of civic involvement as part of the college experience.

Why is this book needed?

COOL and Campus Compact believe that there is a potentially huge pool of individuals and groups at colleges and universities who can participate in public and community service in many creative and useful ways. Higher education, which has been traditionally in the forefront of recognizing and working to alleviate social problems, has a special interest in adult literacy. Dedicated to learning, teaching, research and service, colleges and universities place a high value on a literate populace.

Higher education can contribute special resources to working for literacy.

Higher education can contribute special resources to working for literacy. Colleges and universities can be centers of activism, where students, faculty, staff and administrators work to create a change on campus and in the community. The energies of college students and the skills and interest of higher education professionals are a large, and mainly untapped, resource in the effort to increase literacy in the United States.

What is in the book

Chapter 2: Literacy: An Overview provides some basic information about the issue of literacy in the United States. How is literacy defined? What constitutes literacy or illiteracy? Who is affected by illiteracy? What has happened in the past when the United States attempted to address this issue? This chapter should answer some questions and raise still more.

Chapters 3-6 give practical advice about how to get involved in local literacy efforts in thoughtful and effective ways. These chapters explore some of the questions you should ask yourself, the campus community and the local community.

- ☐ What are other concerned citizens already doing?
- ☐ What roles can you play in addition to those of a tutor or teacher's aide?
- ☐ How can you use your skills and the resources of the university to effect change?
- ☐ How can you go about helping another person read and write?

Foster the crucial link between thought, action, and reflection.

These chapters are the heart of the book, because they provide the crucial link between thought, action, and reflection.

Chapters 7-9 concentrate on the issues of recruiting and promotion, training and supervision, and fund development. Once again, practical advice and concrete examples will help you as you plan a literacy project at your institution.

Chapter 10: Program Profiles gives specific profiles of programs at colleges and universities across the country, which already have an involvement in literacy work. Names and addresses accompany each profile in case you need more information.

In *Chapter 11: Issues* you will find a series of articles written by educators, adult learners, and literacy advocates about issues ranging from a learner's perceptions of a literacy conference, to how to use poetry with adult learners, to an historical perspective on literacy.

Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts contains a bibliography and a list of contacts and information sources. The final chapter also contains a comment and update page for readers to complete and return to COOL.

Depending on your prior experience, involvement, and knowledge about literacy, you may use the book as a whole to start a new literacy effort at your institution or you may use parts of the book to generate new program ideas and contacts for an existing program.

Terminology

A note on the terms used throughout the resource book: in order to avoid confusion, the word "*learner*" is used to refer to a person who is enrolled as a student in a literacy program. The term "*student*" refers to undergraduates or graduate students at colleges or universities. "*Literacy service provider*" is a local, national or regional agency that offers tutoring or teaching to adults or teenagers.

A springboard for action

"You can read and write. Share it with others"

This book is a springboard for action. It is an attempt to encourage thoughtful and responsible involvement in literacy work. Learning fosters knowledge; knowledge brings power. By becoming an advocate for literacy and taking action to help others learn, you, your institution and the local community can benefit enormously. "You have a skill you can share and you may not even realize it—you can read and write," writes a man who has worked in literacy projects for many years. "Share it with others."

Louisa B. Meacham, Campus Outreach Opportunity League
Beverly Schwartzberg, Campus Compact

Washington, D.C.
August 1987

LITERACY: AN OVERVIEW 2

What is Literacy?

When people first hear statistics about the number of illiterate adults in the United States, they are inclined to doubt what they hear. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 26 million adults in the United States cannot read or write well enough to perform the basic reading and writing tasks considered essential to functional literacy. These tasks include such everyday functions as reading a ballot and addressing an envelope. Another 45 million adults are only marginally competent at basic skills. This means that approximately one out of every three Americans cannot read or write well enough to be considered fully literate.

Illiteracy in the United States is not confined to any particular community.

Illiteracy in the United States is not confined to any particular community, area of the country, economic class, or specific ethnic group. The problem cuts across state lines and community boundaries. The highest rates of illiteracy are found among economically disadvantaged groups. Illiteracy rates are also high among the unemployed and among prison populations. But the problem does not stop there. Many illiterate Americans live in middle- or upper-class environments. Many are employed and have high school diplomas.

There is no single cause of illiteracy. Illiterate adults may have grown up in families of non-readers, where parents did not encourage reading. Individuals may have dropped out of school because of frequent family moves, long-term illness, or employment at a young age. Many adults with reading problems have learning disabilities. For some, illiteracy is not an isolated problem; it can be accompanied by a complex set of other needs.

Literacy, most simply defined, is the ability to read and write.

Literacy, most simply defined, is the ability to read and write a given language. To many, the issue seems clear-cut: either one is literate or one is not. Upon closer examination, however, the issue becomes less well-defined. What does it mean to be literate? What is illiteracy? Does an individual become literate after writing his or her first word? A first composition? Or upon reading a first book? Does one become literate when one finishes fourth grade? Eighth grade? Or when one graduates from high school? The answers to these questions lie in how one chooses to measure literacy. There are a variety of ways to measure literacy skills and, therefore, a variety of answers to the questions.

Measuring literacy

The Census Bureau has used "years of schooling" to measure literacy. The fifth-grade level was established as the cut-off point; in other words, everyone with a fifth-grade education or beyond has been assumed to be literate. But such a conclusion is not necessarily justified. Even if a fifth-grade reading level determined the line between literacy and illiteracy in today's society, not all fifth graders read on the fifth-grade level. In addition, individuals who once read on a fifth-grade level can lose their reading skills without practice. This definition of illiteracy provides few clues to the individual's ability to perform a number of tasks essential to modern-day survival, like recognizing street signs, reading medicine labels, and filling out job applications.

More recently, standards to measure "functional literacy" have been developed. The Adult Performance Level (APL) test, developed at the University of Texas in 1975, measures skills through a number of common tasks, such as writing checks, reading advertisements, addressing envelopes, and determining the correct change in return for payment. Applied to current population statistics, one recent application of the APL standard of functional literacy indicates that 27 million Americans are functionally illiterate.

In 1986, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) created its own measurement of functional literacy, and suggested that 10 million adults were functionally illiterate. However, NAEP concluded that U.S. teenagers and adults have a serious problem with higher-order skills and critical thinking. For example, forty percent of Americans cannot use a road map; eighty percent cannot read a common bus schedule or figure out a tip in a restaurant.

Whether there are "only" 10 million or as many as 60 million people in the United States who are illiterate, the problem is still overwhelming and demands action.

These statistics demonstrate the difficulty of knowing how many illiterate Americans there are. Whether there are "only" 10 million or as many as 60 million people in the United States who are illiterate, the problem is still overwhelming and demands action.

The number of illiterates is not likely to diminish soon. About four million people are enrolled in remedial programs across the country. Some of these learners will take several years to move out of the pool of illiterates; some, unfortunately, will leave the programs before reaching their goals. Meanwhile, between 1.5 and 2.3 million illiterate Americans—new immigrants and school dropouts—are added to the pool each year.

Costs to society and to individuals

There is a more important question behind the numbers: what effect does illiteracy have on society and on individuals? For society, the costs of illiteracy are huge. The Business Council for Effective Literacy estimates that functional illiteracy costs the United States billions of dollars each year. Business and industry are hurt because of lost productivity, accidents in the workplace, lack of qualified workers, and loss of potential markets for products and services. The U.S. Government spends innumerable dollars making complicated procedures—from income tax forms to military manuals—more accessible to problem readers.

The costs to the individual non-reader are the greatest of all.

Though the costs to society are high, the costs to the individual non-reader are the greatest of all. While it is possible to lead a productive and dignified life when one is less literate, one's life can become marked by fear of exposure and a feeling of powerlessness and dependence. The ability to read and write gives individuals the power to make their own decisions by opening a new world of information. It enables individuals to become more informed voters and to participate fully in a democratic society. Literate people have more freedom of self-determination, whether they wish to read to their children or get a job promotion.

Think of a world without the ability to use books and writing for pleasure and for progress, and living without the chance to explore new worlds in print. Imagine not meeting even the most simple, ordinary standards of the present world—if you were unable to write a check, apply for a job, or get a driver's license. Then the personal effects of illiteracy become more clear.

What has been done?

Though there has been much attention paid to literacy in the 1980s, illiteracy is not a new problem. There have always been illiterate Americans. (It is true that the definition of literacy has changed. A century ago, people were considered literate if they could sign their names. Today the skills required are much greater.) Campaigns against illiteracy have been part of American schooling and public life for many years. Historians have looked at the importance and rate of literacy in colonial and nineteenth-century America, but there are no easy comparisons since literacy has not been measured in any uniform fashion.

The military has paid close attention to the literacy of its recruits since the nineteenth century, but their statistics only measure a certain segment of the population. The great influx of immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries increased national pressures for English literacy. For new Americans, the definition of literacy changed from simple reading and writing to include citizenship and other skills. President Hoover formed a national task force on adult illiteracy in the 1920s. The findings of Hoover's commission, however, had little impact on national policy in the wake of the Great Depression.

The issue of reading has been brought to the attention of the American public at many points since that time. In 1955, Rudolf Flesch published the best-selling *Why Johnny Can't Read*. While his conclusions were controversial, the book inspired a national debate over the teaching of reading that attracted attention to literacy issues, including adult illiteracy. In 1964, President Johnson launched the Adult Basic Education program (explained later in this chapter) as part of the Great Society reforms. The 1970s brought the Right to Read campaign, which again had little actual effect on national education policy but did provide some research on literacy and publicity to literacy issues.

Along with federal funding for Adult Basic Education, state and local governments increasingly have dedicated efforts and funds to literacy. Private literacy agencies like Laubach Literacy International (est. 1955) and Literacy Volunteers of America (est. 1962) have provided basic literacy instruction for thousands of people (see Types of Literacy Programs, this chapter). These organizations, along with many other groups, match volunteer tutors with learners in one-to-one pairs, and provide training as well as materials for their volunteers.

The late 1970s and the 1980s have seen a new public awareness of illiteracy.

The late 1970s and the 1980s have seen a new public awareness of illiteracy. In 1982, the Coalition for Literacy was formed. The Coalition is made up of public and private literacy providers such as the

American Library Association, the U.S. Department of Education, Literacy Volunteers of America, Laubach Literacy International, and others. The National Ad Council helped implement the Volunteer Against Illiteracy campaign, with the slogan "the only degree you need is a degree of caring."

In 1983, the Reagan Administration issued a call for a "National Literacy Initiative." While there was no new federal legislation or funding provided, President Reagan stated four goals: to raise awareness of the problem; to stimulate private sector activity; to further private-public cooperation; and to generate community action. In 1984, the College Work-Study Program began a pilot program using federal funds to pay work-study students performing literacy service in the community.

As part of the federal agency ACTION, the Volunteers In Service To America program (VISTA) places workers in community projects where they work for at least one year in return for a small stipend. In 1985, special focus was given to literacy through the development of a VISTA Literacy Corps which concentrates on placing VISTA volunteers in local literacy programs.

In 1984, two television networks—PBS and ABC—joined forces in Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS), a media campaign to promote literacy. Through special programming, public service announcements, and events, PLUS has raised awareness of literacy issues across the country, promoted a national literacy hotline, and provided resources for local communities to build their own literacy networks. Other issues addressed by PLUS are job training skills, workplace literacy, and the problem of school dropouts.

How can higher education become involved?

Colleges and universities can provide invaluable human and physical resources to community and national efforts.

In colleges and universities across the country there are thousands of potential workers for literacy. They include students, faculty , administration, and staff. Individuals can help in many ways. They can volunteer in community organizations as tutors or classroom aides; they can recruit adult learners. Individuals and institutions can support legislation, give aid to community agencies, and help raise awareness of illiteracy. Colleges and universities can provide invaluable human and physical resources to community and national efforts. Higher edu-

Mobilize resources to work for a literate nation.

cation can also provide a valuable commitment to literacy efforts through scholarly research and opportunities to earn academic credit for service. This book offers concrete suggestions for some of the many ways that colleges and universities can mobilize their resources to work for a literate nation.

Types of Learners and Programs

As one gets involved in the issue of literacy, it is helpful to know something about various kinds of programs, services, and learners. Literacy is a complex issue and, with the increased attention it has been receiving in the 1980s, has generated new ideas, new resources, and new programs.

Types of learners

People enter literacy programs for a variety of reasons and for a wide range of reasons. Learners come from the United States, Southeast Asia, Europe, or South and Central America and may or may not speak English.

There is a distinction between Basic Reading (BR) learners and English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. Basic Reading projects address the needs of learners native to the United States or learners who have a speaking knowledge of English. ESL projects offer help to those people who do not speak and/or read English. In ESL programs, some learners may be literate and often well educated in their own language, while others may lack basic literacy skills in both their first and second languages.

Learners may enter a program of their own volition, or they may be pressured into learning by friends, family, or relatives. A learner may welcome the support and encouragement of family and friends or may wish to keep his or her new learning quiet. The decision to try to learn to read again is a momentous one. One man carried the New Jersey Literacy Hotline number in his wallet for over a year before having the courage to call for help. His story is not unique; it points to the enormous fears that can accompany a person's decision to work toward literacy.

The decision to try and learn to read again is a momentous one.

Learners may have dropped out of high school, or they may have been pushed out. "Push out" is a term used to describe people who remained in high school for four years, received a diploma but never succeeded in learning the basic skills of reading and/or writing. People who were pushed through and out of high school often fell behind at an early age and simply never caught up.

Questions arise when one hears that someone attended school for twelve years and graduated but cannot read. Learners tell stories of sickness, of frequent moves and new schools, of physical and sexual abuse, of learning disabilities that were undetected and undiagnosed, of home environments which did not encourage, and sometimes discouraged, reading. Any of these situations alone can be enough to prevent a child from learning or retaining information at school.

Learners' goals are as different as the learners themselves.

Learners' goals are as different as the learners themselves. Some people have a specific purpose in mind. This may be to receive their high school equivalency diploma, to obtain a driver's license, to read the Bible or other religious works, to read and fill out an application form, or to understand a want-ad. Other goals can be more general: to help children with homework, or to get a better job, to feel more confident, to be able to navigate the bus or highway system, or to be more active in the community. Some learners may not be able to read at all while others may have some reading skills. Therefore, while learning all the letters in the alphabet may be a short-term goal for one learner, it might be a long-term goal for a non-reader.

Adult learners must be in charge of their own learning.

Adult learners must be in charge of their own learning. You may or may not agree with the goals a learner has set for him or herself. You may think a goal is too challenging or not challenging enough. When working with a learner, the teacher or tutor must accept the objective the learner has set and work to create a realistic time frame within which it can be accomplished.

Please do not make the mistake of thinking that because one person is more educated and more literate than another, the more literate person is somehow more intelligent. Think of the man in New York City who was a janitor in a large office building. Every morning he received written orders describing his tasks for the day. Every morning he would approach a different person, quietly explain that his glasses were at home and that he needed to hear his orders for the day. After listening once to the complex set of directions, instructions, and assignments, the janitor could memorize everything and go about his work. Day in and day out, this man needed energy, resourcefulness, and intelligence just to find out what his daily schedule was.

Another man, Peter, from the Northeast, ran his own business. He was able to get by for many years by relying on his partner and a small circle of friends who knew about his reading problem. If he was called upon to read something unexpectedly, he simply explained that his "glasses are at home" and had the other person read to him. He finally decided to enter a tutoring program when his fiancee learned of his inability to read.

Remember the importance of mutual respect.

Whether you are a tutor or working with learners in another context, remember the importance of mutual respect. As new learners begin to read, they will be facing a frustrating and challenging task. Your encouragement and support is crucial.

Types of Literacy Programs

Because there are different kinds of learners with vastly different needs and goals, there are different types of literacy programs that try to reach learners and offer them assistance, instruction, and encouragement.

Literacy programs are found in a variety of settings and use many different teaching strategies and methods. Some literacy programs are independent while others are affiliated with a church, a correctional facility, community college, library, or other institution.

Methods of instruction include one-to-one tutoring, small group instruction, classroom instruction, computer-assisted instruction (CAI), or workbook series used in conjunction with a television program. Some programs use very structured textbooks and programs of instruction while others rely on materials developed by tutors, teachers, and learners.

The following list describes the basic types of programs existing today. *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* contains a more complete listing of programs, addresses, contacts, and phone numbers.

Programs in elementary and secondary schools

Many local elementary and secondary schools offer tutoring or remedial programs for children who are behind or "at risk" in some way. Some high schools have a minimum basic skills requirement for graduation. Tutors are helpful to those high school students who cannot pass a basic skills test. Other schools may offer ESL tutoring classes for children who do not speak English.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs

ABE programs focus on students 16 years and older who, for whatever reason, did not finish high school. ABE programs are run by the local board of education with funds from the state and national departments of education. They offer classes in high school equivalency diploma preparation and basic skills. ABE programs are staffed by professional teachers. Some ABE programs use volunteers as classroom aides or as tutors for learners who need individualized help.

Private, non-profit volunteer literacy programs

A number of private, non-profit groups offer tutoring services to adult learners. Groups like the Assault on Illiteracy Project (AOIP), Laubach Literacy Action (LLA), and Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) train and support volunteers who work one-to-one or in small groups with the learners. The non-profit literacy programs also develop and publish reading and learning materials which can be of great use to people involved in a tutoring project.

These organizations have national offices which provide management training, support, and encouragement for state and local affiliate groups. See *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* for more information about how to contact their national and local offices.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

Community based organizations (CBOs) are described by the Association for Community Based Education (ACBE) as "programs set up to serve a given geographical area—usually disadvantaged. They are formed by their constituencies...to meet specific needs that exist within the community. They often link education and community development activities." CBOs frequently use non-traditional methods of teaching and learning. They also tend to be "focused on helping learners meet objectives they themselves set in response to their own needs."

Community based organizations vary widely in size, focus, and organizational structure. They share a commitment to education that is based in the community, that responds to the particular needs of the people it serves and that is staffed and managed by people from the community. An example of a community based organization is Navajo Community College, an institution of higher education chartered by the Navajo tribal government which assists members of the Navajo Nation. The Association for Community Based Education (ACBE) serves as a clearinghouse and network for CBOs.

STARTING A PROGRAM 3

Planning

There are three basic ways to get involved in literacy work: as an individual, as part of a group linked to an existing community literacy program, or as part of a group designing a campus-based tutoring program.

As an individual

Getting involved as an individual serving in an existing community literacy project is straightforward and direct. That type of involvement makes a lot of sense if you have a limited amount of time to give. In part 3 of this section, there are some suggestions about how to identify programs in the community with which you can coordinate. In *Chapter 5: Taking Action*, you will find a number of ideas about what kinds of individual services you can provide to a local literacy program. Keep in mind, however, the involvement lasts only as long as your personal energy and interest does.

As a group

If you are interested in working as part of a group that has a strong and continuous relationship with local literacy groups, you will have to spend more time organizing the project than if you were working as an individual, but the results can be satisfying and beneficial to you, the institution you represent, the local literacy program and, ultimately, the learners. Organizations demand your energy and time because they are based on the commitment and hard work of a few individuals.

One of the most positive results of organizing a group effort is the development of a community of people at your institution who are committed to literacy. People from all parts of the college or university community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators, as well as local community people are brought together and communicate with one another in a new way.

Establish a lasting tie between the institution and the community.

The remaining part of this section as well as *Chapter 4: Working With....* will be helpful for you as you structure a literacy project. *Chapter 5: Taking Action* and *Chapter 10: Program Profiles* provide program ideas and profiles of existing campus/community literacy projects. A campus/community literacy project is particularly effective because it establishes a lasting tie between the institution and the community. This kind of tie can bring about sustained institutional change which benefits the community and the college or university. Both communities can learn from each other and can benefit from a positive, cooperative relationship.

Do not duplicate the services that already exist in the community.

It is possible that there are no existing community literacy programs in your community. It is also possible that there may be people within the college or university community who have literacy needs themselves. In this kind of situation, you may be interested in setting up a campus-based, independent literacy project. This is a worthwhile but difficult task; not one to be undertaken lightly.

Avoid reinventing the wheel. You do not want to duplicate services that already exist in the community. Make every effort you can to find an existing literacy project in the community or another social service or human service agency that may wish to provide literacy services to its clients. But if there are no literacy groups there and if you wish to help people who are members of the college or university community, then forge ahead. All the sections in the book will be helpful to you. *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* will be particularly useful as you go about researching methods of tutoring, training, supervising, and evaluating.

Questions and Answers

Getting involved in the issue of literacy or any other kind of social service project is exciting and challenging. Part of the challenge comes from discovering the complexity of the issue of literacy and struggling to answer some of the questions that people unfamiliar with the issue may ask.

Questions college and university community members ask

Q. No one on campus seems to know anything about the issue of literacy. How can people be made aware of the problem?

A. It is important to increase the knowledge about literacy in general and the needs of the community in particular. Awareness meetings can be held in central buildings on campus, dormitories, cafeterias, and libraries. *Chapter 7: Recruiting and Promotion* contains suggestions on how to draw attention to literacy and to efforts being made on campus to involve people in the issue.

Q. There are a few literacy programs in the community but none of them are interested in working with college or university volunteers. What should be done?

A. The first step is to find out why the local programs are reluctant to work with college or university people. It may be the result of a bad experience in the past with another campus group. If so, acknowledge that the programs may have a legitimate concern but point out that it shouldn't preclude the local programs from ever working with campus groups. Meet with the program directors and be specific about what can and cannot be accomplished by the volunteers who are available on campus. Make sure not to promise more than can be delivered. It might make sense to start out with a one-time project that gets people from your institution involved and helps establish trust between the campus group and the local literacy agency.

Establish trust between the campus group and the local literacy agency.

It is possible that the local literacy program simply does not use large numbers of volunteers. In that case, discuss the possibility of a project involving work-study students or professors who act as consultants to the program. See *Chapter 5: Taking Action* for a variety of ideas on how the college and university people can contribute to a literacy program in addition to the traditional role of a volunteer tutor.

If there are no local literacy programs, look to other social service agencies that might consider adding a tutoring component to their services. Legal clinics, programs for young mothers who may have had to drop out of school, or local tenant cooperatives. Another alternative is to work through the local school system. Tutoring children and teenagers is all part of increasing the literacy in the community.

Q. The tutoring and training sites are off campus. How can the programs be made more accessible?

A. Look into public transportation routes—buses, subways and the like. Make sure you have maps available with the routes marked on them and a phone number to call in case a volunteer gets lost. Encourage people to travel together. There is also the possibility of using university vans and cars. Another option is to arrange to have learners and tutors meet on campus in classrooms, libraries, or office buildings.

Questions students may ask

Q. I'm just an undergraduate. What skills do I have that can be helpful to a literacy program?

A. You can read and write. Those skills are absolutely vital and should not be underestimated. Since you are student, you have a sensitivity about what it is like to be a learner. You share with an adult or teenage new reader some of the same anxieties and excitements.

If the literacy program is not in need of tutors, think of the other skills you possess. What did you put on your college application? High school newspaper?—help develop a tutor/learner newsletter. Spanish club?—work at orientation to enable Spanish-speaking learners to communicate and get their questions answered. Have you ever done any baby-sitting?—help organize a child care program for the children of learners.

If you are older than the average student, there are a number of suggestions in *Chapter 5: Taking Action* in the section on Program Ideas for Non-traditional students.

Q. I'm from out of town. I don't know anything about the local community. How can volunteer if I don't know my way around?

A. Look in the college or university directory and find some students who are from the local community. They are the experts on what the community is like. The first time you go into town to volunteer go with two or three other people. It helps make you less nervous.

Q. I don't have time to volunteer. What can I do if I've got a full load of classes and other commitments?

A. You have a lot of choices. Integrate community service work into course work. See *Chapter 6: Literacy and Learning* for suggestions. Arrange to have a work-study job placement in a community agency. *Chapter 10: Program Profiles* contains examples of campus/community literacy projects that use work-study students. A final option is to get involved in one-time or short term projects like literacy conferences, designing a brochure or a week-end fundraising drive.

Questions faculty, staff and administrators may ask

Q. Literacy work and basic education is removed from higher education. Why should a college or university be involved in literacy?

Literacy and learning are part of education.

A. Literacy and learning are part of education. Research on the topic of literacy, adult education, or bi-lingual education can engage faculty and can expand the body of scholarship in those fields. Providing assistance to the community promotes good relations and good faith between the institution and local neighborhoods. In *Chapter 10: Program Profiles,* Brevard Community College, Seattle University, University of Pennsylvania, and Yale University are among the programs which involve faculty, staff, and administrators in literacy work. Michael Holtzman's article *Teaching is Remembering* in *Chapter 11: Issues* discusses how, as a faculty member, he went about setting up a literacy program at University of Southern California.

Q. I have no expertise in education or public policy. What can I contribute to a literacy project?

A. As a person who reads and writes, you can contribute a great deal to a literacy project by serving as a volunteer tutor. As an administrator or faculty member, you can encourage students and colleagues to participate in literacy projects. "Program Ideas for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators" in *Chapter 5: Taking Action* provides other ideas for involvement.

Q. I have a limited amount of time on my hands. How can I find the time to work on this issue?

A. It is possible to get release time for community service work. Another idea is to tie service to a literacy project to other research, an outreach project which links the campus to the community. Short term involvement such as giving a speech in support of literacy, inviting local literacy workers to speak as guest lecturers, organizing a literacy awareness week, sponsoring a student-run literacy project, or serving as a consultant to a local program.

Questions local literacy service providers may ask

Q. We worked with a local college two years ago and the volunteers could never fit into our time schedule for training and tutoring. Why will this time be any different?

A. Make the expectations for time commitments clear in recruiting efforts. Many students on campus commit to Big Brother/Big Sister programs for a year. There is no reason that the same type of match can not be arranged for literacy programs. Training schedules are not set so firmly in stone that some modification can not be made. It is possible to train a small group of people from a college or university to serve as an on-campus corps of tutor trainers. Hiring work-study students to tutor learners or working with a faculty member to incorporate tutoring into course work are ways to ensure commitment.

Q. Students on campus lack skills and maturity. What can they provide to a literacy program?

A. Students, young and old, have energy, excitement, and creativity. They have not learned that it can not be done. Students also have plenty of concrete skills that can be of service to a local literacy program. Even if a program uses only professional instructors to work with learners, there are plenty of other roles for students. These include such varied tasks as: helping with public relations, recruiting, designing posters, caring for children of learners, doing research on the history of literacy or helping with bulk mailings. *Chapter 5: Taking Action* is full of a range of ideas for student involvement.

Q. Our program deals exclusively with adult learners. Most university students are young, how can the age barrier be overcome?

A. In a match between a student and an adult learner, the learner can benefit from being in a position to teach the college or university student about life experiences, working experiences, or family life. Students have fewer defenses built up about the right or wrong way to do something and, therefore, can be more receptive to using a variety of teaching techniques and alternative learning materials with learners.

Another point to k eep in mind is that a growing number of undergraduates are older than the traditional 18 to 24 year old. This pool of students can be recruited to work with adult learners. *Chapter 5: Taking Action* includes a section on program ideas for this particulat group of students.

Q. We work with English as a Second Language students. How can the language and cultural barriers be overcome?

Students have not yet learned that it can not be done.

A. Making contact with ethnic and cultural groups as well as foreign language departments on campus can give you access to students and faculty with a knowledge of languages other than English. By providing adequate orientation to the literacy workers and the learners who will be working together, a lot of misconceptions about cultural differences can be cleared up from the beginning of a program. Creating support groups for the workers and learners is a good way to ensure that any problems that arise can be talked about and addressed before they get serious.

While the questions asked above are not the only ones that need to be answered when beginning a literacy project, they provide an overview of some of the most common concerns.

The remainder of this book provides you with ideas and advice which will enable you to address these and other concerns.

The First Steps

Organizations grow out of the commitment and hard work of a few individuals. A program may eventually involve large numbers of people, but establishing a framework is a task often accomplished by a small group. As you take the first steps, you may be working completely alone or with the help of only two or three people. That is an effective way to operate at the beginning. A small group can get a great deal accomplished and can lay a solid groundwork so the organization is ready when large numbers of people begin to get interested in joining you.

As you plan involvement in literacy work, focus on the following tasks.

Identifying existing literacy efforts

The first thing you will need to discover is what is going on already. Find out what kinds of literacy services are available and for whom they are structured. Identify which programs use volunteers (as tutors/teachers' aides or in other roles) and those which might welcome work-study students as paid staff people, or faculty or administrators as consultants.

Look both on campus and in the community.

On campus

Is there a *service program* on campus which already links the campus to the community? Does it offer tutoring projects or other specific literacy services? Does it have a project at a women's shelter, a homeless shelter, a food bank, or other places where the people being helped might also need help with literacy skills.

At Wesleyan University in Connecticut, the campus community service program includes several kinds literacy projects. At the Adult Learning Center in Middletown, students work with learners through an ABE program. Literacy Volunteers of Greater Middletown matches students with adult learners from the local community. The tutor/learner pairs meet in the local library for their weekly lessons. In a program linked directly to Wesleyan, a community tutorial for lower income minority and Hispanic children is organized and run out of a building on the campus. Elementary students meet on a weekly basis with Wesleyan undergraduates.

Does your university or college have a *Department or College of Education, Social Work, Public Policy or Urban Studies*? These departments or any other related departments may have literacy projects in place. There may be research being done on literacy, Adult Basic Education, ESL or Basic Skills. Ask at the various department offices about faculty members who might be interested or who might be knowledgeable about the issue of literacy. Remember, faculty members are also members of the local community and may therefore have strong ties to existing community projects.

At Temple University in Pennsylvania, the Institute on Aging's Center for Intergenerational Learning sponsors Project LEIF (Learning English through Intergenerational Friendship). The program matches student volunteers with elderly refugees to tutor English as a Second Language. The older refugees benefit from the instruction and companionship while the tutors gain insight into a new culture. Through piloting and testing innovative projects like LEIF, Temple's Institute on Aging is able to further its goal of reducing age segregation and intergenerational tension.

Does the personnel department of the college or university have something like a campus *employee improvement project?* This type of program offers classes to people who work on the support staff at the campus in everything from college level work to basic skills or ESL. Talk to the managers of this program to see if you can get involved.

Duke University in North Carolina, sponsors the Duke Read Program which pairs students with Duke employees in need of tutoring. The Read program is part of Duke University Volunteer Services (DUVS). Interested students are recruited through newspaper articles, general DUVS recruiting drives and word of mouth. Working with the Durham County Literacy council, the students then receive training in the Laubach method. Tutors and learners are matched by a student project head from DUVS and then arrange to meet once a week in employee lounges, offices or other sites convenient for the learners. Learners are drawn from the maintenance, hospital services and physical plant divisions at Duke University. The division heads are responsible for making workers aware of the availability of the free tutoring services. In addition to individual tutorials with Duke students, a paid teacher is on duty every week for learners who need to work on GED preparation. The learners meet for two hours, one of which is paid released time, the other hour coming out of the employee's own time.

Does your institution provide *remedial classes and help for students at the college or university* who may have reading or writing problems themselves? There is a possibility that literacy classes are already part of the curriculum.

In Iowa, North Carolina, Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin, community colleges are the source for providing basic skills instruction to adults. In other states, the community colleges play a significant role in providing ABE classes. The ABE programs in California and Florida work with over a million adults.

In the Community

Take a careful look at what kinds of literacy programs already exist in the community. You can collect information about what is out there by contacting any or all of the following sources.

Regional, state-wide or city-wide literacy task force. There may be a clearinghouse or coalition which has already taken an inventory of existing programs in your area. Information about these types of groups should be listed at city hall or at the state house. The local library is always a good source of contacts and phone numbers if the other sources cannot help you.

Large scale national volunteer literacy programs. They might have a state office or local affiliate in your area (see *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*).

Local library and the local and state departments of education. These institutions often oversee literacy programs or have listings of independent projects.

County jail or other correctional facilities. There may be tutoring projects or ABE programs for inmates.

Social service agencies and non-profit organizations. These frequently provide services to single mothers with dependent children, homeless or hungry people, battered women, high-school dropouts, and the elderly. These kinds of human service programs sometimes have a literacy component or may consider adding one.

Identify people from the community who would be interested in being part of a planning group.

Once you have found the groups or programs in your area which provide literacy services, you will want to identify people from the programs who would be interested in being part of a planning group. Give these agencies a call, tell them who you are and that you are starting to plan a literacy project. Find out what they are doing and what kinds of projects would complement and/or enhance (not duplicate) the services the existing programs currently provide. The advice of people already "in the business" is crucial and can take many forms. Some people may just talk to you over the phone while others may wish to participate in planning, development, and implementation.

If the local literacy people seem reluctant at first or simply uninterested in working with you, do not abandon the effort to work with them. Keep in touch with them, call them once a semester or solicit their advice. They may come around eventually. They may be waiting to see how your program takes shape and what the depth of your institution's commitment is.

Work in partnership with the community, not separate from it.

Remember, you want to work in partnership with the community, not separate from it. Do not be alarmed if you get some initial negative response from the community. Local literacy efforts tend to be overburdened, underfunded and understaffed. Some local literacy groups may have had a bad experience with a college group in the past. Work to overcome a negative impression, for in the long run, such groups are the best source of information and advice for the literacy efforts you want to launch on campus. They also have experience in the areas of training, placing and supporting volunteers as well as knowledge about methods of recruiting and matching literacy clients. See *Chapter 4: Working With....* for more advice about developing relationships with individuals and organizations in the community.

If there is no current literacy effort in your area, look to related social service agencies. These are places where the clients may be in need of literacy assistance even though they have entered the program to get help with another problem. Local churches and other religious groups are also a good source of information about literacy efforts or community agencies or projects which may have need of a literacy program.

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, students from Bryn Mawr and Haverford colleges volunteer at a local homeless shelter. The shelter, run by the Committee for Dignity and Fairness for the Homeless, sponsors a number of programs including an in-house literacy project, a GED project and an employee advocacy project. College students help out in the employment project by assisting learners when they set goals, write resumes and organize their job search. By recruiting through campus mailings and word of mouth, 9-10 students worked at the shelter during the school year. In 1987, 6 students remained in Philadelphia over the summer to continue their work.

Identifying a core group of workers and supporters

Begin to recruit a core group of three or four workers and supporters who want to help you plan and follow through with a campus literacy effort. Work towards a mix of student, faculty, administrative, and community representatives. Include freshmen who will have a full four years to carry on the project. If your core group is balanced from the start, then your literacy efforts will reflect that balance and will appeal to a broader range of people. However, the most important characteristics in the initial stages of a project are a commitment to literacy and the desire to get things going. Work for balance and equal representation but concentrate on people who are dedicated and willing to put in time.

Setting objectives

Once a core group is in place, it is an appropriate time to set some preliminary tasks and objectives. It is important to do some preparatory work prior to any large scale recruiting efforts. You need the input of a group of people for any major decisions, but you should begin the process of formulating a plan. You can work quickly at this stage. Take advantage of your enthusiasm, energy, and momentum. Set a starting date to work from and outline some tasks. Initial objectives might look like this:

☐ In 2 weeks from the starting date, recruit a core group of five to eight people who are willing to work hard and who, if possible, represent different groups within the campus and the local communities.

☐ In 2 weeks from the starting date, set a time, date and place for your first large scale planning meeting.

☐ In 2 weeks from the starting date, send letters and information about the first meeting to 25 people from the campus and local community.

☐ In 3 weeks from the starting date, develop a rough list of literacy programs that would welcome help from the campus community.

The First Meeting

In reality, you and whatever small core group you have been working with will have had meetings prior to this "first meeting." This one and a half to two hour meeting will open up the literacy project to more people from the college or university and local communities. It is time to create a broader base for the literacy project and involve the energy and ideas of a larger group.

Some general advice about meetings

Boring meetings which get nothing accomplished can be the kiss of death for any group regardless of the urgency of the issue or the level of enthusiasm for a project.

☐ Keep to the agreed upon time limit.

☐ Avoid talking at or lecturing the group. Whenever possible, have a discussion and let everyone have a voice.

☐ Give people something to do right away. If people do not feel needed, they will not feel any urgency to get involved. Delegate tasks that are well-defined.

☐ Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up! Keep in contact with people by phone or by mail.

☐ Do not get nervous about numbers. If fewer people show up than you expected, think of them as a small, fervent band of enthusiasts. If more people than you expected show up, delegate, divide the group into small working teams that can get a lot accomplished. Whatever happens, do not panic!

Who should be at the first meeting?

Students

Try for a mixture of people. Identify individual students, student leaders, or groups of students from all over campus. Examples include student service organizations, students interested in teaching, foreign students association, Black students association, literary club, computer club, or student government.

Faculty members

Faculty may want to volunteer in projects themselves or serve as sponsors of literacy courses or research. Send out the word through departmental bulletins and newsletters or through personal visits. The School of Education, Urban Studies, and Social Work may have an involvement in the literacy issue, but do not limit the appeal to the obvious departments. You might also try the English Department, School of Journalism, Sociology or Foreign Language Departments.

Administrators and staff

Administrators and staff members may want to get involved as volunteers. In addition to recruiting this group as volunteers, get the official support of the administration whenever possible. A simple endorsement in the form of an open letter to the community from the President or a Dean can help you gain access to college or university resources and may open some doors in the community. Remember that the administration has a vested interest in the quality of student life, the commitment of students to the life of the community, and the quality of the institution's civic involvement.

Literacy service providers / community members

Invite local literacy workers to attend the meeting. They can take an active role at the meeting when it comes time to describe the types of literacy services already available in the community. As mentioned before, they know the ropes and have a feel for the needs of the community. Keep in mind that the real community leaders are sometimes not the obvious people. For instance, often the person who runs a local day care program knows more about the educational needs of the parents than anyone else. Talk to someone who knows the community, particularly the area where there are real literacy needs.

Learners

If there are associations of adult learners or support groups for other people who are in need of literacy services, make an effort to include them. The learners are the people you are trying to reach, and if they participate in the planning of a literacy campaign, your efforts will be that much more successful.

How to get people to the meeting

Set a firm time, date, and place for the meeting. Make it convenient and accessible to campus and community members. An early dinner on a weeknight or Sunday evening or a meeting over long lunch is a good time and two hours is a reasonable length for the meeting.

Write a letter of introduction, explanation, and information to the people you would like to have at the meeting. If possible, include a phone number in the letter so people can call if they have questions or need clarification.

☐ For the community people to whom you send the letter, include a simple map of your campus and information about where to park or what the best public transportation routes are.

☐ If you can get a few other people to sign the letter with you, so much the better. That is an indication that the organization of this project is spread among a variety of individuals and groups.

☐ Keep a copy of the mailing list so that people who are unable to attend the meeting can be sent information and be kept abreast of developments.

Followup the letter with phone calls to see who is planning to attend the meeting. Keep a list of those who cannot be there but would like to know about future meetings and progress.

What is on the agenda?

You will want to include *an explanation of the literacy problem* in your area. Draw attention to the projects and programs that the core group has identified that currently provide literacy services. You may want to have a few brochures or handouts with this information. See if you can arrange for someone from a local literacy program to contribute to this presentation. It is a simple way to invite community involvement from the very beginning.

After the introduction, you will want to have *a discussion of how the group wants to get involved.* Ask questions of the group as a whole. If it is a large gathering, you can split into small groups to discuss the questions and then regroup later.

Start a discussion of how the group wants to get involved.

Do not feel you have to determine the answers to all these questions at once. The large group may need to divide into smaller working units after the meeting to investigate and assess both the needs of the community and those of the local literacy programs. However, the first meeting is the time to raise issues and begin to think about them.

The questions that need to be addressed fall into a few basic categories. The first concern is the needs of the local community. Are there gaps in the current literacy efforts in the community? Issues to be addressed include:

Who is in need of literacy services in the community?

Basic Reading learners
English as a Second Language learners

Adult learners
At-risk youth
Teenagers, high school drop outs
Prison inmates
Mentally disabled learners
Elderly
Refugees
Immigrants
Migrant Workers

Which literacy efforts in the community are in need of assistance?

Are there literacy programs which, because of their location, the type of learner they serve or their current funding or staff level are in great need of assistance? Are there literacy programs in the community that do not utilize volunteers or people from outside the local community?

What kinds of roles can college or university community members play?

Direct Services to Learners

Work as one-to-one tutors
Work as classroom aides in an ABE or Basic Skills program
Work as small group tutors/facilitators
Organize support groups for the learners
Recruit learners/spread the word about available services
Organize and run a conversation group for ESL learners
Plan an oral history project about the local community and interview learners and other community people about their experiences
Help with the initial registration of learners: testing/screening/orientation
Transport learners to and from tutoring or classroom sites
Develop and oversee a letter writing exchange to help develop learner's writing skills
Develop training programs on topics like job hunting, stress management or voting rights

Services to a Literacy Project

Public Relations
Volunteer/ learner recruitment
Clerical/office support and coordination
Fundraising
Community outreach and awareness/public speaking
Research and development of materials and curriculum
Conferences/meetings
Recognition ceremonies for staff, volunteers or learners
Tutor training
Training programs for tutors, teachers and staff on issues like learning disabilities, reading comprehension or computer management of information
Finding new tutoring or training sites
Research on topics like evaluation of learner progress, the history of literacy or literacy policy

What next?

After giving participants some time to think in a large group or talk in small groups, have everyone discuss the initial responses to the questions. It is helpful to have a blackboard and chalk or some paper and markers to record the ideas of the group.

Identify some tasks that need to be accomplished before your next meeting. Beginning objectives may be to:

☐ Develop a comprehensive list of all literacy service providers in the community along with a list of social service agencies which have a literacy component in addition to their main services.

☐ Talk to local literacy providers and develop a "wish list" of ways that the campus community could be of service to the program. Try to get specific job descriptions if possible.

☐ Create a tentative list of the resources (human, physical and financial) of your institution. Think of ways that the institution as a whole can be a part of a literacy project.

☐ Compile a list of names, phone numbers, and addresses of everyone at the organizational meeting.

☐ Compile a transportation list of bus, subway, bicycle, and pedestrian routes to local literacy office sites. Make an additional list of tutoring and/or classroom sites if they are separate from the program offices.

Of course there may be other tasks you think of that need to be accomplished, but this is a good list to start. Make sure that you assign these task to individuals or small groups before the group disperses.

The conclusion of the meeting

End on a positive note. Set the time, date and place for the next meeting. Everyone should leave a name, number and address so you can follow up. Ask people to bring a friend to the next meeting and to discuss the literacy project with others. Encourage enthusiasm in the planning and execution of the objectives the group has set.

Looking ahead

As the plans for a literacy project develop, it is important to think about structural issues. How is the program going to work?

☐ Will the group provide direct services to learners, will the group provide services to the staff of local literacy programs, or both?

☐ Where are people going to work—on campus, off campus?

☐ Who will have primary responsibility for placing the campus literacy workers?

☐ Who will have primary responsibility for training them?

☐ Will the program connect with one or two literacy programs or more than that?

☐ Who will have the responsibility of training and supervising the workers?

☐ Who will evaluate the program?

Form partnerships with existing literacy programs in the community.

These are questions to think about and to address in future meetings. There is no perfect way to structure a program. Different campuses and different communities will dictate what is best for your area. However, it is important to form partnerships with existing literacy programs in the community. Even if the project you develop is on-campus, make sure that contact has been made to keep people in the community informed of your activities.

WORKING WITH.... 4

Working With....

The purpose of this chapter is to give you advice about how to work with various groups as you structure a literacy project. You will be encountering learners, community literacy program staff and volunteers, as well as representatives from the community at large—contacts may range from municipal and county officials to human services agency personnel, to local librarians and businesspeople.

Even if the literacy program you are working on is independent and based on campus, you have a connection to the local community.

.... Learners

Literacy is learning. Literacy is reaching people who have difficulty reading and enabling them to become independent readers, people who can get access to information that frees them. The literacy project you organize may or may not involve direct services such as tutoring or teaching. You may be providing indirect services to the community literacy program itself. However, working with new readers is the basis of any literacy project so you can expect to have some contact with learners.

Issues of awareness and sensitivity should be confronted and addressed as soon as one begins to work with people who are learning to read. *Some things to keep in mind:*

☐ Every person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

Less educated does not equal less intelligent.

☐ Less educated does not equal less intelligent. This point has been made before, but it bears repeating. The life experiences of a person who has trouble reading and yet has functioned, often with a high degree of success in the so called "literate world," should not be taken lightly.

☐ The decision to ask for help takes great courage. There are stigmas that accompany illiteracy. This is particularly true for people who grew up in the United States with access to "free and equal" education and who are unable to read. Many less literate people struggle to overcome fear, embarrassment, and shame. An adult learner from Chicago who addressed the 24th Annual Literacy Volunteers of America conference put it this way: "There are those of us who are ready to become visible, there are others who wish to remain invisible." It is important to recognize and respect that distinction.

There are problems or commitments that can slow the process of learning.

☐ Learners often have important problems or commitments that inhibit or slow the process of learning. A child's illness, job conflicts, and family obligations can make it difficult for people to maintain continuity of learning. This is a fact of life in adult education for which you should be prepared.

Some barriers to learning are obvious. For instance, if you are involved in a tutoring project which meets in the evening, keep in mind that sheer physical exhaustion may prevent a learner from giving you his or her undivided attention. Make sure both you and the learner have had a chance to eat something before you start work. Energy is important.

Other barriers to learning can be more serious. A woman learner was beaten by her boyfriend who felt threatened by her developing skills as a reader. The young man often followed her to tutoring meetings and argued with her and the tutor about his anxieties and anger. In another instance, the wife of a learner became upset when her husband, who was matched with a female tutor, began to receive phone calls from a strange woman. The tutor, respecting the husband's desire to keep his new learning a secret, was unable to explain herself or the reason for the calls.

Sometimes you may be aware of these kinds of problems. At other times, a learner may be reluctant to let you know about them. Always be aware that major conflicts and pressures compete for a learner's time and attention.

☐ Learners are anxious to acquire skills quickly. When one has waited, sometimes for years, to come forward and appeal for help, there is a tendency to want to learn everything as quickly as possible. Do not waste this person's time by concentrating on subjects or materials that are of interest to you or that you feel are appropriate. Respect the learner's goals and his or her wishes. At the same time, help learners recognize that reading is not a skill that can be acquired overnight. It takes time and hard work for both of you.

Roles for learners

Some learners participate in a literacy project, reach their goals, and leave. Others may wish to become active in the organization and management of a literacy program.

Learners are the best and most compelling advocates for any literacy program. They can speak to the issue and its human costs with a conviction that others can never have. For those learners who are comfortable being visible, it benefits you, the program, and the learners if you call upon their assistance and leadership. More and more literacy programs are encouraging and developing ways that learners can have a voice in all aspects of the program from public relations to corporate fundraising to development of materials.

Learners speak to the issue and its human costs with a conviction that others can never have.

Some ways that learners have become involved include:

☐ *Public relations.* Public speaking, radio and television interviews, public service announcements, and interviews with local newspapers are all ways that learners can participate in the area of PR. After a group of learners appeared on ABC News Nightline on April 10, 1987, the National Coalition for Literacy had to hire additional staff to deal with the volume of calls on the National Literacy Hotline. The stories that the learners told were simple, direct, and powerful.

☐ *Fundraising.* In New York, learners sometimes accompany staff or board members during visits to potential donors.

☐ *Orientation Programs.* For programs that have tutor or learner orientation, a presentation by a learner is an effective way to welcome people, give them an overview of the program, and answer questions about literacy. Any role-playing exercises that take place during orientation can also involve the learners who are currently in the program.

☐ *Recruiting.* Learners from local neighborhoods and communities can talk to friends and help the local literacy program establish credibility in the community where the need is greatest.

☐ *Development of learning materials.* Learners can help when choosing textbooks and workbooks. They can also develop stories, poems or songs for other people to read.

Learners can serve as volunteers in a program, as paid staff, or members of the board. In Maine, the Literacy Volunteers organization had a learner on the board of directors. Through the federal program Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), many learners have become paid staff members at local literacy groups.

Learner involvement evolves over time.

Learner involvement evolves over time and may not be something that is part of a program right from the start. It is vital to gain the trust of the learners before one begins to make demands upon them, particularly when those demands mean that the learner must expose himself or herself in some way. If the initiative for involvement comes from the learners themselves, so much the better. If not, there are ways to develop interest and involvement. One way to start is through learner support groups.

Learner support groups are informal gatherings held on a monthly or weekly basis. Topics of discussion include: coping with job pressures, fear, anxiety, health care issues or neighborhood development. An outside person can lead the discussion or it can be run by the learners themselves. Allow the support group to get established and then raise the idea of further involvement. Let the group members discuss it on their own and make recommendations to you based on their ideas and discussions. This way the learners have involvement and control from the start.

A word of caution before one approaches learners and asks them to increase their involvement. Be sure that your enthusiasm and excitement about an idea does not overwhelm the learner and result in coercion. Advance an idea, give the person or group you are talking to plenty of time to think about it and make sure that they feel comfortable taking on a new role in the program.

Another concern is that many adult learners have tried and failed a number times. The system offered hope, only to withdraw support or not follow through. If you plan to approach learners for involvement, be willing to follow through and make sure their involvement has meaning.

If a learner or a group of learners do something out of a sense of obligation and not out of a real desire to get involved, they can end up getting used.

.... Community Literacy Programs

When asked in the fall of 1986 about getting college and university people involved in literacy work, the program director of a county-wide tutoring project burst out laughing. She became very serious, however, when she described a phone call she received late one fall semester. A student from a neighboring university had called and asked if he could "please have an illiterate for a few weeks." The professor of a class he was taking had made tutoring a requirement for the course. The faculty member had done this without making contact with the local literacy groups. Although this story is an extreme example, it is true and it reflects a concern that many literacy service providers have when they talk about working with colleges and universities.

There is a critical need for communication, understanding and trust.

There is a critical need for communication, understanding, and trust.

Some things to think about as you develop relationships with the community:

☐ Relationships with agencies and individuals take time to develop and may change. Do not get discouraged if initial response to your program or your ideas is not overwhelmingly positive. Friendships and partnerships do not form overnight. If you are beginning a new literacy project, remember that your program is new and you may have to prove your good intentions.

☐ Do not give in to the "white knight, savior of the community" complex. If you present yourself to the local literacy programs as the great hope, salvation, and solution to all literacy problems, you may well fall on your face. You will almost certainly alienate the people with whom you are trying to work.

☐ Community literacy agencies are not perfect by any means. However, many people who work in local literacy projects have been doing so for years, sometimes decades. It is important to respect their expertise and advice.

.... Other Community Organizations and Agencies

The problem of literacy is not one that stands alone.

The problem of literacy is not one that stands alone. It is often linked to other issues and concerns. It is helpful to establish ties with community agencies that have contact with people who might benefit from tutoring or teaching services. Ongoing relationships with human service agencies are also important if a program needs to refer a learner for assistance or advice. The first group includes agencies like:

Health and Human Services
Division on Aging
Youth and Family Services
Women's shelters / crisis centers
Homeless shelters

A second group of community agencies to communicate with consists of organizations which can provide assistance and support to a literacy project. These groups can be a source of tutoring sites, additional tutors, reading and teaching materials, or contributions. They are:

Local religious organizations
Civic clubs
Community education programs
Local libraries

Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) has compiled a list of national organizations ranging from the Lions Clubs to the Printing Industries of America, Inc. to the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the U.S. The groups on the list have signed up in support of the efforts of PLUS to increase literacy in the U.S. You can obtain a copy of the list by writing or calling PLUS (see *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*). Contact the local chapters or branches of the national groups and see what they are doing to support local literacy efforts. Be prepared with a list of suggestions if they have not yet gotten involved.

TAKING ACTION 5

Introduction

Appeal to the interests and strengths of the various members of the campus community.

Getting involved in literacy efforts means working with a variety of different groups and individuals. Any literacy project organized on campus should attempt to include people from the various segments of the university or college community. Likewise, there are several places to look in the local community when organizing a literacy effort. Remember that all the groups and individuals you work with will have different expectations and interests. Be flexible and open-minded.

This chapter gives you ideas about how to appeal to the interests and strengths of the various members of the campus community while at the same time meeting the needs of community literacy programs.

Program Ideas for Everyone

The program summaries in this section will give you ideas about the variety of ways that you can get involved in local literacy efforts. Some of these programs are already in place and will mention a particular college or university program. Other projects are ideas suggested by literacy service providers or campus community members that might work at your institution.

Tutoring

The purpose of literacy programs is to help people learn. A number of literacy programs use volunteer tutors to help adult learners. Adult basic education programs and others that employ professional teachers often use volunteers as teacher's aides. Working directly with beginning readers is an exciting and challenging task.

☐ *Tutors.* A number of private, non-profit literacy programs are based on the philosophy that if a person can read he or she can be trained to teach someone else to read.

At Columbia University in New York, graduate students in the School of Law have developed a tutoring program. A local junior high school refers learners who are bright but seem to be at risk of dropping out. Each week, roughly 30 learners travel by public transportation to Columbia and meet with their tutors in university classrooms. Tutors and learners are matched one-to-one and concentrate on subjects the learner is having trouble with in school or on homework assignments. Tutors are recruited through posters, campus mail, and word of mouth. The recruiting and matching are organized by student volunteers who also double as tutors. Most tutors commit to a semester of working with a learner.

☐ *Teachers' aides.* Professional teachers who work in ABE classes are often in need of teacher's aides. There is also a demand for trained volunteers who can work individually with students who are falling behind in class or who need additional help with their classroom assignments.

☐ *Small group tutoring.* Some literacy programs encourage learners to work in small groups or learning circles. A trained volunteer serves as a facilitator for the group; answering questions, working on assignments and helping the group whenever needed.

Testing / placement of learners

Once a learner has made the decision to enter a literacy program, it is important to assess that person's academic strengths and weaknesses so he or she can receive the appropriate level of instruction. Testing and placement procedures vary from program to program. Some places may have a complicated set of written or oral tests, some projects may simply have a learner read a list of words, other programs may contact a learner by phone and ask informal questions about the person's past learning experiences and current goals. Initial testing and assessment is important. Periodic follow-up can also be helpful. Most literacy programs have a system, formal or informal, to monitor the progress of learners and their teachers or tutors.

☐ *Initial testing.* Testing often takes place at the central office of a literacy project and in sites throughout the community like libraries.

☐ *Assessment and Placement.* If you are a faculty member or student in the field of education and testing, you can assess test results and make recommendations about learners' current reading abilities. From an assessment, suggestions can be made about what course of study would be appropriate for particular learners.

The Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) in Pennsylvania, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania United Way/PLUS Task Force, has developed an on-campus Assessment Center. The Center screens students and helps determine which local literacy program is appropriate for the learners' individual needs. Learners are referred to basic tutoring programs, ABE classes or high school equivalency programs depending on their skill level. CCAC staff train volunteers who serve as the assessors. By 1987, 31 volunteers had been trained to work at the Center, interviewing learners and administering simple word recognition tests. Following testing and assessment, the learners are referred to a literacy program and given assistance in contacting the program.

☐ *Testing for learning disabilities.* Some adult learners have a learning disability. If you have expertise in this area, diagnosis, recommendations and advice are very helpful to local literacy programs. You can serve as a consultant who is available to work with tutors over the phone or to lead workshops on adult learning disabilities.

- ☐ *Follow-up testing*. There is a need to assess the progress of learners, teachers and tutors. Designing a follow-up testing procedure or helping to administer the test at designated sites around the community are ways to help out with this crucial process.

Tutor and learner orientation

Orientation for learners is another ongoing project at literacy programs. In projects that use tutors, there is often a delay between the time a learner makes contact with a program and when he or she gets placed in a class or with a tutor. In order to retain confidence and interest on the part of the learners, some groups have organized an orientation session for learners. The session focuses on what the program entails, what the learners can expect and what questions and anxieties the learners may have.

- ☐ *Role playing*. Literacy programs sometimes use role playing in training and orientation for both tutors and adult learners. Skits can focus on a variety of topics ranging from the first meeting between a tutor and learner, what to do if a learner's family is discouraging him/her from continuing to learn, if a tutor is pressuring a learner to study subjects that are of no interest to the learner, or if a tutor or learner is chronically late or does not show up to meetings. There is a measure of uncertainty and sometimes fear accompanying an adult's re-entry into the world of education and learning. New tutors and teachers also get nervous about beginning their work. Using role playing exercises helps to bring out those fears and address them.

  The director of a literacy program in Seattle, Washington suggested that people from a college or university help design and produce role playing skits. If adult learners in a program are interested, they could also get involved in writing and appearing in the skits.

  Another way to participate in role playing exercises is to help moderate a discussion group following the skits. These skits can produce strong reactions. The conversations can get very emotional. Having a neutral moderator can be helpful.

Training

There is a constant need for training workshops in programs that use tutors. Literacy programs may also provide training for volunteers who are not directly involved in tutoring but may have contact with learners by phone or during testing or assessment. Training programs vary in length from group to group, but the average is about 12 hours spread out over three or four sessions. Training takes place at different times and places; sometimes at night, sometimes during the day or on weekends. Individuals with flexible schedules could help out in this area by serving as trainers.

☐ *Initial training.* Initial or pre-service training particularly for tutors, is extremely important. By receiving instruction on how to train tutors, you can expand a program's ability to reach and train more volunteers.

At Rice University in Houston, Texas, the coordinator of the Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP) has been trained as a tutor trainer. He became a tutor through the local Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) group and then took a training course that enables him to train volunteers using the LVA method. The Rice program now has the capability of training students and other interested volunteers on campus, at times that are convenient for members of the college or university community.

☐ *In-service training.* Once initial training and orientation have taken place, There is a need for follow-up or "in-service" training for staff, volunteers, and learners in a literacy program. Topics for a one to two hour in-service training session include: how to use a computer to do your recordkeeping, liability insurance for literacy programs, an introduction to learning disabilities, writing exercises to reinforce reading skills, using the newspaper as a teaching tool, or reading comprehension.

At Literacy Volunteers of America-New Jersey (LVA-NJ), the state director invited a doctoral candidate in adult learning disabilities from Teacher's College at Columbia University to serve as a consultant to the literacy program. The doctoral candidate was able to use LVA-NJ's pool of learners and tutors to get research information for her dissertation; LVA-NJ tutors, learners and staff benefited from her workshops, presentations and general consulting services.

If you have expertise in any of these areas, you could arrange to present a formal or informal talk at the literacy program. Another option is to serve on a consultant basis. Arrange to be available by phone if people have questions or to come in once a month and have office hours.

Materials for use with learners

Literacy programs need books and materials for learners. Some programs have money to purchase textbooks; other groups rely on materials at hand or materials that can be produced cheaply and easily. If you help produce learning materials, when you are doing design, lay-out or printing you may want to teach the people you are working with—fellow volunteers, staff people or learners—how to perform those tasks or use those skills. Teach and share your expertise whenever and wherever you can.

☐ *Commercial Texts*. Some literacy programs have money in the budget to purchase commercially produced reading series and workbooks. It would be helpful if a faculty member, graduate student, or undergraduate could preview the various series which are available and make recommendations to the literacy program person in charge of buying materials. This could be done in partnership with a group of learners.

☐ *Neighborhood stories /oral histories and biographies*. Interview learners and other people in the neighborhood and community to get stories about the area. Turn the stories into a book for the program. For students and faculty interested in making literacy work part of an academic course, an oral history project can double as an independent study project.

☐ *Learner stories / poems*. Work with learners to develop their stories, poems, or autobiographies. Literacy Volunteers of New York City, Inc., produces the *Big Apple Journal* which compiles stories, poems, and thoughts of learners in the program. It also includes some art work and illustrations.

☐ *Letter writing*. Writing is a powerful way to reinforce and expand a learner's emerging skills as a reader.

At the University of Pennsylvania, part of a graduate education course linked adult learners in an Adult Basic Education class with graduate students in the School of Education. The learners and students, who had never met or spoken on the phone, got to know one another by writing weekly letters.

☐ *Cookbooks*. In Providence, Rhode Island, a local women's agency incorporates a learning project into its other services. Through the project, women are producing a cookbook using their own recipes and illustrations.

☐ *Picture File*. In English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, it is helpful to have a file of pictures which represent single words (apple, car, or football). Taken from magazines and newspapers, fixed to paper or thin cardboard, and organized by subject or alphabetically, these picture files are useful to tutors and learners.

☐ *Computer lessons*. Some of the new Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) programs have "authoring" software. This means that lessons, vocabulary building exercises, paragraphs, and comprehension questions can be tailored to fit the individual needs or level of a particular learner. It takes time to enter these lessons into the computer. This type of project might appeal to people who are comfortable with computers and wish to do independent work on their own time.

☐ *Menus, Job Applications, or Voter Registration Forms*. While this may seem trivial, it is often everyday reading material like school bulletins, shopping circulars, or community newsletters that learners need to study. It is relatively simple to compile a collection of forms, applications, and tests from local businesses, government agencies, neighborhood groups, and social service programs.

Putting together a series of menus from local restaurants is helpful as well. A young learner in a literacy program in the Northeast described his experiences as single person, inviting women out to dinner and having to insist on going to Howard Johnson's because it was the only restaurant in town with pictures on the menu. One of his goals as a learner was to go into any restaurant he chose and be able to read the menu.

☐ *Newsletter*. If the learners are interested, individuals with a background in journalism or writing can help set up a newsletter for the learners in a program. While you provide advice and editorial assistance, the learners can practice their skills by writing articles, conducting interviews, and creating artwork for the newsletter.

Recruiting learners and volunteers

Literacy programs need to recruit learners and workers. They also need to solicit the support of the community at large. This takes a lot of leg work and phone work. Putting in time on a recruiting campaign or committing yourself to canvass a neighborhood or a school district is a good way to help out.

☐ *Go door to door in local neighborhoods*. Explain that you are not there to sell anything. Introduce the literacy program and describe the services it provides. Leave a card or brochure and encourage people to call for more information. Get a name and phone number if someone wants more information sent to him or her. Some people you talk to may be interested in getting help for themselves or a friend. Other people may be interested in finding out how they can be of help.

☐ *Canvass other social service agencies in person or over the phone*. Tell them about the services provided by the local literacy agency and see if they might begin to refer clients in need of tutoring.

☐ *Go to local malls, hand out flyers and bookmarks, and talk to people*. Once again, explain the services available at local literacy projects. Bring clipboards and sign up sheets with you.

☐ *Recruit people on campus*. Work through student organizations, departments, dormitories and other groups. See *Chapter 7: Recruiting and Promotion* for more ideas about recruiting college and university community members.

- ☐ *Work through local churches and other religious organizations.* You can arrange to have notices posted in church bulletins or you can make direct presentations to the congregations.
- ☐ *Make contact with local neighborhood groups and organizations.* These range from tenant groups, day care facilities, senior citizens homes and nutrition sites, or veteran's groups. See if you can speak to the group members directly. The alternative is to place notices on bulletin boards or in newsletters.
- ☐ *Work through the local school system.* Since helping one's children read and write better is often a primary goal for illiterate parents, schools are a good place to look for adult learners as well as children who are falling behind and need help. Teachers and administrators notice when parents do not respond to written notices or seem to have difficulty filling out forms. They may be able to help you reach the parents who are in need of tutoring. Schools can also be a source of volunteers. The Parent Teacher Association or the Parent Teacher Organization may be interested in helping out.
- ☐ *Distribute materials at the local libraries.* Although the library may already have an involvement in literacy, check to make sure. If not, recruit the librarians and the library patrons.
- ☐ *Make contact with other colleges or universities.* If there are other schools in your area, see if they might be interested in getting involved. If they already are, share ideas and explore joint projects. These might include: a fundraising project for a local literacy agency, a major learner recruiting drive in three hard-to-reach neighborhoods in a city, a paint and fix-up project in a community learning center or a book drive to stock a learning center's library.

Child care

A frustration for many learners is an inability to get cheap, trustworthy child care during times when they would like to attend classes or meet with tutors. By providing a consistent corps of people who take responsibility for watching over children, a greater number of learners, particularly young mothers, can have access to education.

☐ *Organize a group that takes children on trips.* You can visit local playgrounds, museums, parks, or libraries.

☐ *Organize a read aloud group.* Stay at the learning center, school, church basement or library where the learners are meeting and read aloud to the children. It is helpful to work in conjunction with the teachers or tutors so that what is being read to the children is consistent with stories their parents can read to them.

☐ *Organize a group that involves the children in athletics.* Soccer games, basketball leagues or clinics with college and university athletes or coaches is good way of involving the athletic department with a literacy program. Incorporate reading into the activities by reading books on sports or reading the rules of the game.

Transportation

A barrier to learning for some people is an inability to get to the classrooms or tutorial sites. Fear of getting on the wrong bus, the wrong train, or getting out of one's familiar surroundings can be paralyzing.

☐ *Run a van pool that picks up learners and delivers them to classrooms or tutorial sites.*

☐ *Collect bus, subway, or street maps and simplify them for use by learners.* Mark out the route to the learning center and type up simple information about fares and the phone number of the center.

Office work / support services

Having competent, reliable people to organize and run the central office of a literacy program is critical. There are a number of ways to help out and take pressure off the staff. Some agencies may need support around the time of big projects (a conference or awards ceremony) while others may need daily or weekly assistance. It is helpful to clarify that from the beginning.

☐ *Answer the phone.* If the literacy program has a toll-free number or hotline that people call at night, there is a need for follow-up calls the next day. If there is a big PR campaign underway, the program may need extra people to handle the increased volume of calls. Answering the phone is relatively simple, but make sure you receive training about how to record information, how to refer people, and how to answer specific questions about the literacy program.

☐ *Help with filing and recordkeeping.* Literacy programs have to track the progress of learners, teachers and tutors, and make reports. This generates a lot of paper work which needs to be kept up to date, recorded, and filed.

☐ *Serve as the receptionist.* If a group of people is committed to staffing the literacy program office each week, it allows the office staff to do field work or attend meetings. Design a calendar and get people to sign up for certain two-, three- or four-hour shifts. Make sure you have a back-up plan in case someone cannot make it.

☐ *Help with bulk mailing projects.* If the organization has to send out a newsletter, conference announcement, or other bulk mailing, you could help out by stuffing envelopes, collating mailings, or licking stamps. This is a good opportunity to undertake a project with a large group of people. Turn it into a party, read stories out loud as you work and enjoy yourselves.

Fundraising

Teaching people to read costs money. Even when a program utilizes volunteer tutors and staff, someone has to buy stamps, pay the phone bill, and buy books. Fundraising events are a wonderful way for an informal group of people or an established campus organization to provide much needed assistance to a literacy project. For a more detailed look at how to raise money for on-campus programs, turn to *Chapter 9: Fund Development*. The following are simple ideas for one-time fundraising events that can also double as public outreach and awareness projects.

☐ *Used book sale.* Encourage students at your college or university to donate their used textbooks to a "Books for Literacy" sale. Set up the sale at the beginning and end of each semester and donate the proceeds to the local literacy agency.

☐ *"Run To Read," "Dance To Read," "Read for Literacy," or "Walk For Knowledge."* Sign up people who are willing to participate and have them get sponsors. For example, a sponsor can donate $1 for every book read in a 7 day period or $2.50 for every mile walked.

☐ *Solicitations in stores and malls.* Contact the local supermarket or shopping mall and see if people can stand outside and solicit the shoppers as they go in and out of the stores. Have a flyer, bookmark or button to hand out to contributors in return for their donations. Most stores and malls have specific regulations about soliciting so make sure and obtain permission from the managers.

☐ *T-shirts, buttons and posters.* Designate a week or two in the cafeterias, student union, departmental offices or dining halls when you can sell T-shirts, buttons, or posters that advertise literacy.

Public relations

Literacy programs are always looking for new ways to advertise their services, attract new learners and volunteers and, in general, get increased exposure and credibility within the local community.

☐ *Videos.* Video can be used to make documentaries describing the services and programs available at local literacy programs for use in recruiting learners, tutors, possible donors, and community supporters. Video public service announcements can be distributed to local television stations or recruiting and PR projects.

At the Rochester Institute of Technology, students with an interest and expertise in video camera work developed three 30-second public service announcements for the local literacy program.

☐ *Posters and Brochures.* Everybody needs brochures; everybody needs posters. You can get involved by designing brochures, flyers, bookmarks, posters, or ads for the newspaper. Adult learners can be reached through print material. Challenge yourself to come up with creative, sharp ways to recruit learners through posters which use symbols, pictures, and simple phrases. If the tutoring or teaching services are offered at no cost, be sure to include the word "free" in the material.

☐ *Public speakers.* Community outreach, awareness, and education is an important part of any literacy program's goals. Some literacy groups offer training in public speaking and education. Faculty members and administrators, as well as students, could agree to speak before religious groups, neighborhood coalitions, local business organizations, or service clubs.

At Hardin Simmons College in Abilene, Texas, students from the Hispanic Club make regular visits to local high schools. The predominantly Mexican-American high school students make contact with the Hardin Simmons undergraduates, have an opportunity to ask questions about college and meet some college students. The Hardin Simmons students keep in touch with the community and encourage the high school students to stay in school and think about attending college.

☐ *Outreach.* Outreach projects can be less formal than a public speaking engagement. Visits to local organizations, schools, or neighborhood groups to talk to members about literacy and illiteracy.

Recognition / awards

Like other organizations, most literacy programs have some way that they recognize achievement, dedication, and outstanding contributions. Learners, staff people, volunteers, and fundraisers often are honored at banquets, luncheons, and other ceremonies. You can organize those kinds of events or you can help add to them.

☐ *Find a site for an awards banquet or recognition ceremony.* The library on campus, a cafeteria for a banquet, or any other facility on campus can lend an air of celebration to whatever ceremony is taking place.

☐ *Provide the entertainment for the event.* Recruit singing groups, musicians, jugglers, or the campus comic. While some organizations have very formal programs for recognition ceremonies, a little entertainment can provide a welcome change from lengthy speeches.

☐ *Design the program posters, brochures, or flyers for the event.* It is rewarding if participants can take home a program with their name on it. It serves as a memento of the award ceremony.

Conferences / meetings

Literacy programs sometimes have local, state, or regional conferences. Having access to the resources of a college or university when organizing an event like a conference would be a great help to a local literacy program.

☐ *Hold the conference at your campus.* If an organization has an affiliation with someone at a college or university, the conference fee for use of facilities and buildings will often be waived.

☐ *Help reserve rooms, arrange for food, or secure parking spaces.* It is helpful to have someone who is familiar with the physical plant of the college or university take care of logistics. Also, a person on campus will often know whom to talk to and how to cut through some of the inevitable red tape.

☐ *Make a speech.* If you are the president of a college or university or a faculty member with an expertise in the field of education, you can say a few words at a recognition ceremony.

☐ *Photograph or videotape the event.* It is important to have a record of the conference for use in public relations and fundraising efforts. It also helps the literacy organization keep track of its history.

☐ *Provide willing workers to sit at registration desks, troubleshoot, or put up signs.* Conferences are a time when there is a need for a group of people to assist the staff so they can be free to give workshops, and participate fully in the conference.

Program Ideas for Students

Existing Student Groups and Organizations

Students have an enormous amount of energy and creativity.

Students have an enormous amount of energy and creativity. Although students graduate and move on, during their stay they provide a pool of talent that can enliven a dynamic literacy project. When approaching students to participate in a literacy campaign, try to work through the students themselves. Find two or three students you know and get them excited about literacy. Include them in the planning and organization of the project. Encourage them to take a leadership role in the literacy effort. When recruiting students remember that the most effective way to reach young people is through other young people. For those students on campus who are older than average, appeal to them to use skills they have acquired at work or at home to help literacy efforts (see Program Ideas for Non-traditional Students).

Encourage students to take a leadership role in the literacy effort.

Some groups or organizations have a particular talent or area of expertise which may be of enormous help to any literacy effort you are putting together. Here are some ideas for projects which focus those skills on the issue of enhancing literacy services within the community.

The artists

Take advantage of the creativity and expertise of the artists within the college or university community. Talk to students and faculty members in the Art, Theater, Graphic Design, or Music Departments. Look into organizations like singing groups, artists' organizations, or student bands.

☐ *Role playing.* Get involved in designing and presenting role playing exercises for new tutors, existing staff members, and learners.

☐ *Performances.* Volunteer and learner recognition take place in most literacy programs. Your singing group, string quartet, jazz ensemble, comedy troupe, or theater club could provide some exciting and new entertainment at a celebration or presentation.

☐ *Benefits.* Literacy groups need money. Colleges and universities have talented group of performers. It is possible to organize a benefit concert to raise money for the local literacy programs.

☐ *Free or discounted tickets*: For the learner of the month or the volunteer of the week, a free trip to a concert or performance is a creative way for a local literacy program to extend its congratulations or appreciation.

The athletes

Athletes have off-seasons when they have some extra time on their hands. At some schools, the athletes and the coaches are local heros and have high visibility in the local community. They can serve as advocates for your literacy efforts. Here are some ways to get the athletes involved in literacy work:

☐ *No pass / no play tutors.* In some high schools, there is now a no pass/no play restriction on student athletes. These high school athletes could benefit from having a college athlete who serves as a role model, tutor, and general source of encouragement.

☐ *Free or discounted tickets.* Another way for a literacy program to recognize and encourage good work on the part of volunteers, staff members, and learners is to provide seats at home games or special athletic events.

☐ *Public service announcements.* Particularly at schools with established, successful teams, you could recruit the current star or a popular coach (whoever he or she may be) to make public service announcements on behalf of the local literacy program.

At the University of Minnesota, the football coach appears on television to endorse reading and learning programs in the area.

Ethnic and cultural groups

On any given campus there are groups which bring together people of similar backgrounds or shared cultural heritages. In some cases, there may be analogous groups within the community in need of some assistance. English as a Second Language (ESL) programs would benefit and benefit from the involvement of the corresponding cultural club. Here are some ideas:

☐ *ESL conversation groups*. These can be a mixture of the community people learning English and the college or university students learning the native language or learning about the culture and heritage.

☐ *Information sessions and training for staff and volunteers*: College or university students could give presentations to staff and volunteers of a local literacy project about the cultural traditions and mores of a particular ethnic group.

☐ *ESL tutoring*. College or university students can serve as positive role models for learners when matched according to like heritage or ethnic background.

Foreign language department

There is an obvious kinship between the foreign language department and any kind of English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Approach students and professors to see if they might be interested in getting involved as volunteers or in linking literacy work to their scholarly pursuits.

☐ *Development of materials*. Students and faculty could be encouraged to develop simple reading materials and writing exercises for ESL learners. With instructions in the learner's native language and text and exercises in English, these materials could serve as a good transition for the learners.

☐ *Presentations to local cultural and ethnic groups*. In order to spread the word to the community about literacy projects and the services they provide, there is a need for people to speak to local groups. If you are proficient in Spanish, French, Portuguese or any other language, you could arrange to do some public speaking on behalf of the local literacy organization.

☐ *Learner orientation*. When learners first enter a literacy program, they are often confused, nervous, and scared. In response to this, some literacy groups offer an orientation session for learners. If you are fluent in a language other than English, you could attend the orientation sessions and provide learners who are not proficient in English with a means to communicate comfortably and get their questions answered.

Fraternities and sororities

Fraternities and sororities are organizations which, because of their permanence, can provide continuity of service to a local literacy program. Because service is an integral part of the structure of fraternities and sororities, they can set up an relationship with a literacy group that lasts for years. Project ideas include:

☐ *Fundraising efforts*. A fraternity or sorority can sponsor and organize a fundraising event each semester to raise money for a literacy project. Car washes, dance marathons, or outright solicitations are among the events that can be tried.

☐ *Tutoring project*. A particular fraternity or sorority can join with a particular local literacy program or a school system to recruit and provide a steady source of tutors.

☐ *Day care for children of learners*. Fraternity and sorority members can look after children while parents are being tutored or are in class. Reading aloud to the children, taking them on field trips, or organizing games would enable single parents or people who do not have access to regular child care to go to class.

Computer club

Computers are used in the management of literacy programs as well as serving as instructional tools for learners. Offering the knowledge and resources of a computer club to a literacy project is a good way to help the literacy service providers and learners, and to teach the computer group about a new use for their machines.

☐ *Creating a data base*. Literacy programs need to keep track of learners and their progress. If the program utilizes volunteers, they also need to be kept in an up-to-date file. Individuals with an interest in data bases can put tutor and student information on a data base, as well as create mailing lists and computerized bookkeeping systems.

☐ *Helping make purchasing decisions.* If a local group gets some money to buy computer hardware or software, people with knowledge about computers can help sort through various brands and stores. Make sure time is spent getting to know the literacy program and getting to know what it needs. Then, recommendations can be made about what to buy and where to buy it.

Program Ideas for Non-traditional Students

A growing number of college and university students are not between the ages of 18 and 24. Not all college or university students live on campus. Those students, who are older than average or who are commuting may have a different approach to volunteer work from younger students. Older students, who may be working full-time jobs and caring for children as well as attending classes, have less extra time than other students. Older, working students "have no time to waste" according to Dr. Carol Ryan, head of volunteer services at Metropolitan State University on Minnesota. "Working adults ...want training and a specified commitment they can work into their busy schedule." Dr. Ryan adds that for non-traditional students, opportunities for academic credit tied to literacy service may be very important.

Older students may have work experience, fields of expertise and varied contacts.

All students can contribute a great deal to literacy efforts. Older students may have work experience, fields of expertise and contacts that are more varied than those of a traditional student.

☐ *Role models.* Older students who participate as literacy volunteers can also serve as role models for their students. A fifty-year old man learning to read and write with the help of a fifty-year old student will see the truth behind the message, "you are never too old to learn."

☐ *Expertise and experience.* The professional experience, skills, and knowledge of older students can come into play in special workshops for literacy programs. Students with experience in the working world, as employees or employers, can offer pointers to

Individuals with extensive volunteer or work experience could provide valuable suggestions on what makes a good volunteer program.

learners on how to look for and obtain a job. Older students can also offer good advice on worksite skills: how to fill out work orders and receipts, take messages, set up a letter, and complete other job-related skills. Non-traditional students with children, or with nursing experience, can offer child care and nutrition workshops.

An older student with previous volunteer experience or experience in business, management, or administration can provide help in setting up an on-campus board and organization. If a student-run literacy project is preparing a budget, for example, help from an experienced mentor can be of great use. If a campus literacy project is thinking about approaching a business for fundraising purposes, getting the advice of an older student with business experience could be very useful. Individuals with extensive volunteer or work experience could provide valuable suggestions to campus groups on what makes a good volunteer program.

Any type of work experience can be helpful: art, office work, construction, mechanical work, or child-rearing. Volunteers with a background in these areas can provide important ideas and contributions about things like posters, special events, organizing day care, mailing lists, and setting up a library or office.

☐ *Community contacts.* Non-traditional students, particularly those who come from the area where the college or university is located, can be an excellent source of advice about community businesses and agencies, and may already have good contacts in the area. A student who has contacts within a civic organization, community center, service agency, business, or school can expand a campus literacy project's community network. It is easier to make contact with a local tutoring and day care agency, for example, if an older student has a child using the services and already knows the program directors. Asking a business for the use of a meeting room for tutoring and testing may be made easier if a former employee of that business makes the request.

Beyond Graduation

An involvement in literacy work need not end after gradation. There are ways to pursue a career in the field of literacy and adult education. It is also possible to maintain involvement in a volunteer capacity.

If you are a student interested in literacy work as a career, you can:

☐ *Do graduate work in Adult Education or Bilingual Education.* There are a number of universities that offer degrees in Adult Education. They include Syracuse University, University of Pennsylvania, Rutgers University, and Columbia University.

☐ *Become a teacher.* Basic skills like reading and writing are taught in elementary and secondary schools. Entering the teaching profession requires a profound commitment to literacy and learning.

☐ *Join Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA).* A number of community literacy projects use VISTA volunteers to do everything from fundraising, learner recruitment and public relations to tutor training and tutoring. VISTA volunteers serve in low income communities across the nation and work on poverty-related issues. They are paid a subsistence allowance by the federal agency ACTION and serve for a minimum of one year.

☐ *Work in a non-profit literacy agency.* Literacy organizations need fundraisers, managers, public relations staff, conference coordinators, and research staff. If your career interests lie in any of those areas, you can pursue them and still be involved in literacy work.

Whatever kind of work you engage in, you can still be of service to community literacy programs. You can continue to serve in the same way you did while in school by volunteering on weekends or after work. You can also use your new skills, contacts, and expertise to help the local projects.

☐ *If you work at a bank,* you can serve on the board of directors of the local literacy project and provide financial advice and services.

☐ *If you are a lawyer,* you can help write bylaws, give legal clinics, and help the local program with liability insurance.

☐ *If you work in a restaurant,* you can provide food at tutor training sessions, learner and volunteer recognition ceremonies, and fund-raising events.

☐ *If you work for a company or corporation,* you can help your employer investigate and set up a workplace literacy program for personnel that have low literacy levels.

The list of ideas is limited only by your imagination and your desire to help people learn to read.

Program Ideas for Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

Administrators, faculty, and staff can provide invaluable support to college or university literacy efforts. Because they are based on the values of reading, writing, and critical thinking, literacy campaigns appeal to the missions of higher education.

☐ *Individuals* can help service efforts in a number of ways: through their visible leadership, community contacts, academic programs, commitment of physical and financial resources, and interest in literacy at work.

Support can also come from an *institutional commitment* to a campus's literacy effort. Colleges and universities often play a vital role in the community as employers and advocates. The existing ties between the institution and the community can provide valuable contacts and ideas for a campus literacy program.

Leadership and Moral Support

Leadership can make literacy efforts more visible and legitimate and boost the spirit of volunteers.

☐ *Creation of a campus task force.* By bringing together administrators, students, faculty, staff, and community members who are interested in literacy issues, higher education leaders can take the first step to a strong, unified commitment. A task force can work to assess the needs of the community and the resources of the institution.

At Brown University in Rhode Island, a representative of the president convenes a monthly meeting of a literacy task force. The task force includes student leaders, deans, the provost, faculty members from departments as diverse as theater and Portuguese and Brazilian studies as well as representatives from personnel, public relations, Brown's public service center and the Rhode Island State Department of Education. By meeting together, the members inform one another of activities and resources across campus and in the community. The personnel office was able, for example, to set up a worksite literacy program for Brown employees, with the advice of staff from the public service center and a faculty member who served on the board of a local literacy agency.

Working together, members of a task force can plan a strategy to meet local needs by using campus resources. In joining representatives of all parts of the university community, a task force encourages common goals and makes individuals aware of others' interests and resources. (See *Chapter 3: Starting a Program* for more advice about setting up a literacy task force).

☐ *Visible commitment.* By declaring an institution's support of literacy campaigns, administrators can create a spirit of commitment and involvement across the campus. Speeches and public statements promote publicity and raise campus awareness of literacy issues. The university can be powerful voice in local, state, regional, and national affairs.

Leadership from presidents, chancellors, and other administrators encourages participation of students, staff, and faculty members.

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☐ *Commitment of university or college resources.* Administrators can support literacy efforts by publicly acknowledging and pledging support for literacy initiatives such as internship and service learning programs that involve tutoring or other literacy work and by encouraging research on literacy issues. Other valuable means of support are listed in this section under "Physical Resources" and "Financial Resources."

Community Outreach

Another way institutions and individuals can help literacy efforts is by helping organizers tap the community contacts of members of the university. Many individuals who work on campus are already involved in local civic affairs, politics, and community service projects. They can provide help in a number of ways:

☐ *Information.* Administrators, faculty staff and local students, particularly commuting students, often are members of or know leaders of local civic organizations and literacy agencies and can provide important information on service opportunities to campus groups. These contacts can help establish a campus program and give it legitimacy in the community, provide experience and advice, and assist in fundraising efforts.

☐ *Volunteers*. Some administrators, faculty, and staff may already offer their time and skills to community agencies in a number of ways. Check to see if staff or faculty at your institution are tutors or volunteers in community literacy agencies. These volunteers can provide advice, experience, and support to new volunteers from the campus community. Do not overlook them when setting up a campus task force, selecting an advisory board for a student project, or creating partnerships with local service providers.

Recruit faculty and staff as volunteers.

Recruit staff and faculty as tutors and volunteers. There is no better way for students, staff, and faculty to get to know one another and work effectively together. Cooperation of the groups also demonstrates the importance the groups place on the issue. Members of the faculty and staff who volunteer as tutors in community agencies may share advice, teaching ideas, and even transportation with student volunteers. Administrators and faculty members frequently serve on the boards of local agencies. Use these contacts. Board members can help campus efforts become legitimate in the eyes of community groups, and can provide special advice and insight about literacy issues and existing community services.

Faculty and staff who have a longer-standing commitment to a particular community than most students can be effective volunteers in a literacy effort.

At Yale University in Connecticut, over 25 employees serve as literacy tutors through the Employee Volunteer Literacy Program. Yale employees tutor reading, writing, and ESL twice a week through the program which is coordinated by Yale's Office of Volunteer Services, Literacy Volunteers of America-New Haven and New Haven Adult Basic Education.

☐ *Policy*. Colleges and universities can have an impact on public policy. By supporting community and national efforts for literacy, administrators and faculty can affect educational and public affairs.

In Philadelphia, faculty members and administrators from Temple University, The Community College of Philadelphia, and the University of Pennsylvania serve on the Mayor's Commission for Literacy in Philadelphia. The Commission coordinates literacy programs throughout the city and develops policy recommendations, and has had an important role in making literacy a priority issue for the National Conference of Mayors, as well as for Philadelphia. Using its college connections, the Mayor's Commission created a new tutoring center based at Temple University.

Scholarly Opportunities

One of the missions of colleges and universities is to educate and further the progress of learning and knowledge. There are several ways to make literacy a part of academic programs. Faculty members can have a strong influence here.

At Brevard Community College in Cocoa, Florida, the Open Campus Program reaches between 5,000-6,000 adult basic learners a year. Brevard also operates a program called BEST-PAL, combining basic reading classes with parenting classes, and hires Adult Basic Education/Teacher/Recruiter/Counselors (ABE/TRCs) who work with adult learners throughout the area. Brevard has been successful in recruiting the hard-to-reach, with 18 classes serving over 200 adults who read at lower than a fifth-grade reading level.

☐ *Make literacy a part of the curriculum.* A number of community colleges and other universities have made basic reading and writing courses a part of their curriculum. These colleges provide experienced professional teachers and offer their services to members of the community. These institutions have seen that their mission is not only to educate the well-prepared, but also to offer opportunities for many levels of learners.

At City University of New York (CUNY), literacy instruction is supported by funds from the Adult Education Act and the Municipal Assistance Corporation. Twelve two- and four-year campuses in the CUNY system offer classes in basic reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a second language. Over 8,500 learners were served between 1984 and 1986. CUNY has been particularly successful in recruiting learners reading below a sixth grade level.

☐ *Support service-learning projects.* Commitment to service flourishes when institutions foster the ethic of civic involvement in all aspects of the educational experience. Service benefits all: the university or college by creating a positive community image; the students, by giving them an opportunity to enrich their learning experiences; and the community, by providing a wealth of powerful, enthusiastic student volunteers and encouraging good institution-community relations. By sponsoring service-learning programs, faculty and administration encourage the value of public service.

Through departments of education, social work, urban studies, languages, sociology, or philosophy, faculty can encourage students to become involved in literacy tutoring. Academic internships, independent study courses, and classes with a service component are all ways of including service in the curriculum.

At Boston University in Massachusetts, student tutors in the Collaborations for Literacy program participate in a one-semester course called "Training in Literacy Tutoring for Community-Based Adults." The class, worth half of a full course credit, includes 18 hours of tutor training, 13 weeks of lesson preparation and tutoring, in-service workshops for tutors, meetings with the faculty advisor, and a project which can be a weekly journal or two case studies.

Other examples of service-learning courses, and suggestions for earning credit for learning through service activities, can be found *Chapter 6: Literacy and Learning*.

☐ *Develop scholarly interests in literacy.* Many faculty members already have interests in reading, bilingual education, and educational policy. If interested students approach faculty sponsors, still other professors may become interested in literacy. The possibilities are endless: conducting evaluative research and testing, developing tutoring materials and tutor training programs, and studying the politics of literacy. Students and faculty are academically enriched by learning new information and furthering the basis of knowledge. Their work can be of great use to the community and literacy providers.

At Pennsylvania State University, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy coordinates the Adult Literacy and Technology Project. The project, headed by a national committee of literacy experts, supports the development of technology use in adult literacy projects and disseminates information on computers and software for literacy programs.

Physical Resources

Even resources are limited, universities and colleges can offer physical support in a number of ways. These contributions can make a world of difference to campus and local literacy efforts.

☐ *Office space.* A campus-run initiative needs a home, with space for working, record-keeping, and a telephone (with answering machine). A reliable address and contact place gives strength, efficiency, and continuity to a project, and makes it easier for community members to reach the project. Access to a typewriter, a telephone, a photocopying machine, a computer, and other office equipment is helpful.

☐ *Tutoring and training space.* At many schools, classrooms are vacant during off-hours: evenings, weekends, and late afternoons. By offering physical resources for tutor training, colleges and universities can make it easier for campus volunteers to participate in training sessions. Rooms on campus also provide convenient tutoring locations. Another possibility is to create a "learning center" in a campus building, where tutors and learners can meet. Books and other resources provided by community agencies or the institution can be made available in a learning center as well.

☐ *Library facilities.* Libraries can provide reading books, reference materials, and good learning opportunities for older learners. Many public libraries have made space available for tutoring. Also, the college or university library may be able to offer use of a room during specified hours. Libraries can reserve a small section of books for adult beginning readers. Find out if there is a free shelf available, obtain permission for literacy learners to use the library, and introduce them to the materials during class time or tutoring sessions.

The Learning Resource Center in the library at Keene State College in New Hampshire has books, curriculum guides and other materials for use with learners. Tutors from the Adult Tutorial Program located at the college use this collection for tutoring and reading materials.

Financial Resources

There are a number of relatively inexpensive commitments that colleges and universities can make to literacy programs. The return on a small investment can be quite large, in terms of community service, institutional and community morale, and publicity both on- and off-campus.

☐ *Support for service program costs.* Schools can provide assistance to student, faculty, or staff volunteers by sponsoring training programs, offering transportation to community agencies, or providing seed money for a library of tutor training materials. Office needs (like those mentioned under Physical Resources, above) can be supplied inexpensively by allowing a campus program to share the equipment of other offices.

☐ *Financial advice.* Expertise is one of the greatest gifts of the university. All colleges and universities employ professional fundraisers who know of a variety of resources, from alumni/ae to corporations to government agencies. The development office can provide suggestions on identifying donors, creating a budget, preparing grant proposals, or organizing direct mail solicitations.

☐ *Matching funds and other incentives.* Student fundraisers work best when they have a clear goal. By offering incentives to reach a goal, the president or chancellor can help support student efforts. A matching gift of $1 for each $5 raised will help students reach their goals and will demonstrate a university's commitment to literacy projects.

Worksite Literacy Projects

One of the largest and most important commitments that universities and colleges can make is to support the literacy of their own employees. A college or university is not isolated from the literacy problems of the rest of the nation and suffers the same losses of productivity, safety, and quality of life from employee illiteracy as do other businesses. The Business Council for Effective Literacy estimates that 15% of the nation's workforce is functionally illiterate. The problem is not confined to workers in unskilled tasks, but affects the professional workforce, too.

A university is not isolated from the literacy problems of the rest of the nation.

By having trained, literate employees, the university benefits in many areas—increased skills, job safety, and productivity. By providing learning opportunities and support for all members of its community, an institution of higher learning can demonstrate a true commitment to educational opportunity. Support of a workplace learning program helps not only the university but the larger community by becoming a model project for other businesses and corporations to emulate.

At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, one food-service employee memorized 1,000 recipes and pretended to be able to follow the written instructions for cooking. The director of food services discovered that the cook was only one of a number of functionally illiterate employees. With the help of the university's adult education center, the director set up remedial instruction programs in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The director of housing agreed to provide "release timed" two hours a day, twice a week, for workers to participate in the program; over 50 food-service workers have since enrolled.

Literacy issues at an institution must be considered with sensitivity, tact, and caring. A person cannot be forced to learn; employees must be willing to participate in programs. Reading and writing problems are a handicap to any worker. They can be embarrassing and risky for employees who fear losing their jobs.

An increasing number of corporations and unions are conducting successful worksite literacy programs, and their experiences provide useful models. Information on how to begin a program is available from the Business Council for Effective Literacy, and in the U.S. Department of Education's publication, "What Works in Worksite Literacy Programs." (See *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts).*

LITERACY & LEARNING 6

Obtaining Academic Credit

Provide students with the opportunity to learn from doing.

Community service work, internships, and action research projects provide students with the opportunity to learn from doing. When service work is brought into the curriculum, students benefit in many ways. First, they obtain an opportunity to see the connection between theory and practice, and a chance to reflect on the issues raised in service. Volunteering for literacy makes concrete some otherwise abstract discussions about language, education, and public policy. Second, integration of literacy service into the curriculum can enrich students' experience by providing training and reinforcement from experienced members of faculty. Supervision of service experiences can make a world of difference by encouraging reflection and action in a structured environment.

Credit is obtained for the learning that results from service or action research.

Some institutions have well-established means of bringing internships into the curriculum. Credit is not obtained for participation in a service project alone, but rather for the learning that results from service or action research. Reflection, reading, writing, and discussion are all ways to contribute to that learning process. In general, there are two routes to earning credit. Academic courses may include service internships or action research as a requirement or option for students enrolled in the course. Alternatively, students may develop independent study work with a faculty supervisor and use an internship as part of the course work.

If you are a student interested in obtaining academic credit, explore your choices thoroughly. Find out about courses with service or action research components by consulting the course catalog or individual departments. Talk to instructors or students who have taken the course previously, and ask to look at the course syllabus. If there is no course work that could have a literacy component at your institution, consider the option of an "independent study" program. Your interest and experience may prompt an interested faculty member to create a course on literacy with a service or action research component.

Course Work

There are many parts of the college or university curriculum that pertain to literacy issues, and courses that require service components may be offered in a variety of departments. Students and faculty may be able to apply literacy work to a class with field work or internships.

If your institution does not offer internship or service opportunities in course work, administrators, faculty, and students can encourage the addition of service-learning in many ways. Students and faculty may work together to revise course expectations to include internships. Administrators can support service-learning projects by encouraging students and faculty to include community work as part of their formal learning experiences.

Some departments that may provide opportunities include:

☐ *Education.* Departments of education offer courses in reading theory, adult education, teacher preparation, and many other issues relevant to literacy. Field work is an important part of many education programs and contacts with schools and agencies may be established already.

At Stanford University in California, a course on the American school system includes a literacy tutoring component. Students enrolled in the course can choose to work in a tutoring project for children or in a local adult literacy program.

☐ *English.* Many English departments have interests in issues of language, composition, and teaching as well as in literature. Those issues are made quite real in service-learning.

English 654 at San Francisco State University in California, is an academic class on teaching reading, with a strong service component. Each week, students meet in class for three hours and tutor for two hours. Each student develops an individual program for the person he or she tutors and learns to diagnose reading problems and to plan and evaluate lessons. Each lesson plan is designed with the supervision of a reading specialist and experienced tutors.

☐ *Political Science, Urban Studies, and Public Policy.* Students and faculty members can bring an interest in literacy into courses with an internship. Faculty members, through their contacts with local government, can help students find internships at the state or city Department of Education. Students can research the politics and finances of adult literacy issues on a local, state, or national level.

There are many other possibilities for including literacy work in courses requiring an "action" component, or for bringing literacy work into courses that already require an independent project. In a computer science course, for example, a student can work with a local literacy agency and set up a project to create learning software for adult learners studying reading, writing, or math. Another idea is to help the local literacy agency work out an information and management system for their records. In all these arrangements and projects, sustained, responsible commitment to the community and its agencies and organizations is important. The community should not be perceived of as a laboratory.

Independent Study

Independent study requires more initial thought and responsibility than enrolling in an established course. Independent study may or may not be a possibility at your institution. If it is, you can usually shape the direction of your studies toward your particular interests. You can propose an individual independent study program or get together with other students interested in literacy and suggest a group seminar. Policies regarding independent or directed studies vary by institution, but there are some general guidelines.

At Vassar College in New York, one professor of African Studies/Religious Studies has sponsored several literacy internships in a local prison.

☐ *Identify faculty sponsors.* You may know just the right person, or you may have to search through a number of departments. If you know an administrator who is interested, see if he or she will be an academic sponsor. What issues interest you in particular? If you are interested in doing research on learning acquisition, think about the psychology or education department. If you are interested in doing research in policy, try political science. Looking at the history of literacy programs? Try English, linguistics, or history. Publishing learners' articles, short stories, or poems can be a journalism project. Think about who would be interested in you and your proposed project. Individual faculty members may be interested in related issues, such as the correlation between illiteracy and poverty.

☐ *Prepare a rough outline for your independent study course.* In seeking faculty sponsorship, it helps to be organized and realistic. Include the following information:

What are your academic objectives? What do you intend to learn?

What materials will you be using? What books do you plan to read to provide perspective on your experience?
Describe the proposed internship. Provide a job description, planned hours, and the address of the organization and supervisor.

What type of supervision and assistance will you need from your sponsor? How often will you meet? What will be your topics for discussion? Will you need help identifying readings?

What kind of work will you complete, and how will it be evaluated? What type of papers will you write? How are they to be graded? How will your internship be evaluated?

How many credits should you earn?

☐ *Discuss your plan with potential faculty supervisors and persuade one of them to sponsor your project and help you further develop the study plan.*

Make an appointment to talk to the potential sponsor. Introduce yourself and describe your proposed study plan and internship arrangements. Describe why your proposal has academic merit and fits into the goals of the university. Many faculty members may feel reluctant to sponsor internship/study programs since they feel that such experiences are not "academic". Be sure that you make a strong case for the academic aspect of your proposal.

At Brown University, a Group Independent Study Project was formed by students interested in literacy issues, and was sponsored by a faculty member with an interest in literacy and by the staff of the public service center. The students who participated in the planning meetings worked together to design topics and issues to be addressed in the course, and plan readings. Students are responsible for teaching different sections of the class, and participate in literacy service projects including tutoring.

☐ *Discuss requirements with the interested faculty member.* What type of reading should you do? How will the internship be evaluated? Discuss your institution's specific procedures to obtain independent study credit. How many credits will be awarded?

RECRUITING & PROMOTION 7

Introduction

Once you have established a working core group of supporters and advisors and have developed the structure of the literacy project, you will want to begin recruiting members of the college and university community. Recruiting and promotion strategies will vary depending on the type of literacy project, but there are some general ideas that will help you. Remember that recruiting and promotion go on all the time. When? Always. Where? Anywhere. How? Creatively and persistently.

Recruiting

This section contains basic recruiting advice. In addition, there are suggestions on how to target the various groups at your institution: students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Convey a sense of excitement.

In general, the recruiting efforts of your group should mirror the enthusiasm and commitment that you feel towards the issue of literacy. If the people who are doing the recruiting can speak from personal experience and convey their sense of excitement about literacy work, then it becomes easy to bring other people on board. Here are some guidelines to review before you begin to recruit:

☐ *Be specific.* It is important to give people who are interested in joining you a clear picture of what is expected. If your group is involved in a tutoring project which demands a six-month commitment, be sure to let people know that right from the start. Whenever possible, provide a range of ways that people can get involved. If the project you are beginning is being organized and run on campus, let people know that they may be asked to spend some time developing the structure of the organization and helping maintain records.

☐ *Be prepared to answer questions.* Think about the questions or misconceptions you had when you first got interested in literacy. Make sure that you can provide clear responses to questions like: Who is illiterate? How can a person graduate from high school and still be unable to read and write? Is there a connection between learning disabilities and illiteracy? Does everyone who has difficulty reading come from another country? Have a one-page flyer with you when you are recruiting which addresses some of these questions and describes the various ways people can get involved in literacy work.

Recruiting is essentially story-telling.

☐ *Be excited and enthusiastic.* Recruiting is essentially story telling. You have a message and a commitment to enable people to read. Tell about the experiences you have had or, if you are inexperienced, about stories others have told you. Convey the message that what your group is doing is worthwhile and that you are giving people an opportunity to share in the excitement.

Be persistent. Some days you may not have much luck. People may tell you they have no time for extra projects or that their individual efforts won't make a difference. Have some answers ready: Suggest a one time project for people who have limited time. For the people who feel that the problem is too large for individual change, remind them that helping one person to read may seem small given the number of people who have problems with literacy, but to the person who is learning to read and seeing doors open, it is not a small thing at all.

Ask people to join you.

Ask people to join you. This advice may seem very obvious but it can be easy to overlook this simple and direct approach. Talk to friends, colleagues, and friends of friends. Ask for their help. People get involved because they feel strongly about an issue, because they want to learn about an issue, or because someone asked them to get involved.

Always get a name and phone number. If you havethe resources, print a batch of 5" by 8" cards that have space for a name, address, and phone number. Create a section on the bottom of the card for the recruit to note the times and days he/she is available and any special talents or skills. Have a stack of these cards at recruiting drives and carry a few with you when you are on campus.

Recruiting Ideas for Everyone

In the dining halls and cafeterias. Put postcards on the tables for people to fill out and send in. Set up a table at the entrance to the cafeteria and talk to people as they wait in line. Get up on top of the tables and make announcements.

In neighboring stores, coffee houses, bookstores, laundromats, and restaurants. If your school has a lot of commuter students, they can be reached by putting up signs in local businesses listed above. Faculty, staff, and administrators can also be recruited this way. Remember to include tear-off sheets with a phone number and contact.

At sporting events. You have access to a stadium, arena or gym filled with people: a great captive audience. Make an announcement at halftime. Roam through the stands with flyers or arrange to have a blurb about the literacy project in the sports program.

☐ *Newsletters, newspapers, and campus bulletins*. You are working with a community that generates a lot of reading material. Try to get some coverage for the literacy project: feature articles, want ads, pictures, or cartoons.

☐ *Libraries*. Libraries and literacy are a natural fit. Put bookmarks at the check out desks; put posters in study rooms; put up displays of books that deal with the topic of literacy.

☐ *Radio*. Create public service and recruiting announcements for campus and local radio stations. Invite learners and tutors to participate on talk shows and interview shows.

☐ *Awareness meetings*. In the student union, in the libraries, or in central buildings on campus, bring people together to talk about the issue and generate increased involvement.

When to recruit

Recruit early and often.

Recruit early and often. If you are recruiting people to serve as tutors, the sooner they are recruited and trained, the more time they will have to work with learners. If your institution runs on a semester system, you can recruit in the spring and do some basic orientation for tutoring that begins in the fall. When the fall classes begin, a group of people is ready to begin training.

☐ In the fall, put up tables at registration. Have a sign up sheet and a gimmick to attract attention like balloons, buttons, or stickers.

☐ Everybody has to wait in line the first few weeks of the semester, for classes, for registration, for sign ups, or sign ins. Be there when the lines form, hand out bookmarks to the people waiting in the bookstore lines, hand out flyers for people to read as they wait to register for class. Be persistent and creative. It is a great opportunity to recruit people and just to get the word out.

☐ At some institutions, students register by mail. See if it is possible to include a flyer or a self-addressed post card in the registration information packets.

Who to recruit

Anybody is fair game.

Anybody is fair game: athletes, artists, linguists, older students, computer jocks, English professors, or the chancellor. Do not limit yourself. Do not assume that "administrators would never be interested in this" or "those chemistry majors are too busy for that." Make your appeal broad-based and inclusive. Give people the opportunity to decide for themselves.

☐ When recruiting for tutoring projects that require year-long commitments, focus on people who live in the community or people who will be around during the summer.

☐ Some students take a semester off or a year off. Faculty members go on sabbatical leave. Consider recruiting these people to work in a literacy projects. Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), a federal program administered by ACTION, asks for a one-year commitment from volunteers who then serve in a local community organization.

People like to have their talents recognized and utilized.

☐ For projects that require a certain area of expertise or knowledge or a particular type of role model, go to the appropriate department, club, or group. People like to have their talents recognized and utilized. The student/faculty photography club can produce a photo essay documenting the activities of a local literacy project or a day in the life of an adult learner. The student jazz ensemble can play at a fundraising event or recognition dinner. The food service workers can compile recipes for use as a teaching tool for learners interested in cooking.

Where to recruit

☐ *In classes.* Ask the professor if you can make a short announcement about the program. If you are a professor, invite someone from the local literacy program—a staff member, current volunteer, or learner—to make a presentation with you or act as a guest lecturer.

☐ *At meetings of student groups.* Arrange to give a short presentation and answer questions at gatherings of student organizations, fraternities, sororities, or clubs.

In dormitories. Work through the residential advisors, dormitory councils, or simply go door to door.

At the faculty club. Most colleges and universities have a club for faculty members. Post signs or, if you are a faculty member, see if you can make an announcement to your colleagues.

At staff or union meetings. Staff meetings are a regular part of institutional life and offer a forum for discussion of issues and projects. For institutions whose workers are unionized, you can make an appeal at a union meeting. If you are a staff person who is a union member, you could petition the membership to take on a literacy project as a group.

Recruiting Student Organizations

As you begin to organize a literacy effort on campus, it is important to look around and see what kind of student organizations already exist on campus.

Look around and see what service programs already exist on campus.

Your first step should be to find out if there is a community service program which joins the campus to the local community. If there is a program and you are organizing the literacy project as part of that existing program, then you have some of the investigative work already accomplished. The program should know what kinds of projects match up college or university community members with the local community. The program's directors can help you make contact with projects that currently provide literacy services or that are literacy related.

If a service organization does not exist at your institution then begin to look around on your own and identify student organizations. Put groups in one of two categories. One group consists of organizations that are service oriented. Groups like this might be: a Big Brother/Big Sister program, a support group for a battered women's shelter or a work project in a homeless shelter or soup kitchen.

For service groups. It is important to remember that literacy work is not always separate from other kinds of social services and needs. If there are existing student service organizations on your campus, you should approach them and let them know about the plan for a literacy project. It may tie into what they are doing already. For instance, the people who are helping out at a local soup kitchen may be getting requests to help fill out forms or read letters. You could put them in touch with local literacy service programs, encourage them to add a literacy project to the work that goes on at the kitchen, or make presentations to the staff and clients at the kitchen about the literacy services available throughout the community.

Another group consists of organizations that focus on an area of interest or expertise. Groups in this category include: a computer club, a literary club, a theater group, or an ethnic or cultural group.

Given the proper direction and assistance, almost any group on campus can develop exciting service opportunities in the area of literacy.

For special issue groups. Given the proper direction and assistance, almost any group on campus can develop exciting service opportunities in the area of literacy. If you encourage, support, and coordinate efforts to create partnerships between literacy service providers and student organizations, you will enable the student groups to participate in an exciting program in the community. The literacy providers will benefit by getting to know students with diverse talents and abilities.

Where to start

Write an open letter to every campus organization. Describe what the literacy group is doing and invite other organizations to participate with you. Offer to attend their meetings to lead discussions about literacy and answer questions about how individual student groups can contribute to local literacy efforts.

Invite other organizations to participate with you.

Suggest some specific projects which might be of interest to a particular group. For instance, when making contact with the computer club, you could mention a local tutoring program's need for a revised data base. When meeting with the video club, you could discuss the need for more video public service announcements for learner recruitment. Keep in mind that a project should be challenging and of interest to the group. It should also recognize and utilize any talents and skills the group may have to offer.

Conclude the letter by asking the student group to think about getting involved in literacy work. Enclose a questionnaire the members can fill out and send back with information on whether they would like to get involved and, if so, what they might like to do. Find out if the group is more interested in short term or continuous involvement. This will help you match literacy providers in need with student organizations in search of projects.

Maintaining contact

Encourage the group to appoint a coordinator to maintain communication between the college or university literacy project and any local literacy programs with which it has direct contact. If your campus literacy group and the local literacy program establish a specific go-between from the beginning it will help eliminate any confusion and will promote good communication.

Recruiting Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

The faculty, staff, and administrators at any given college or university have an enormous amount to contribute to the organization of a literacy project. If these people support, endorse and/or get involved in the project, it will truly reflect the involvement of the university community as a whole.

In the early stages of planning a literacy project, make appointments with key administrators and faculty members. Send a letter in advance outlining the ideas your group has and informing the person of what is being done. If you are making a request for something specific like money, library space for tutoring, or released time for staff volunteers, be explicit about what you need and why you need it.

Invite people to meetings and include them in the planning of the project. Develop a "wish list" of things that you need and see if the administrators can be of assistance.

Promotion

Recruiting and promotion go hand in hand.

Recruiting and promotion go hand in hand. Promote the program, promote literacy, promote the volunteers and workers who keep the program going and, above all, recognize and promote the learners. As the literacy effort gets attention and publicity, you can tie promotion into recruiting drives.

Remember to make sure you have permission from learners to use their names or pictures in any kind of promotional event.

Remember, to make sure that you have permission from learners to use their names or pictures in any kind of promotional event. There have been instances where learners have lost jobs because of unwanted or unexpected exposure. "Going public" can be a momentous decision for a learner: make sure the decision is made with encouragement and not pressure.

☐ Get black and white photographs of the people involved in literacy work and send them to the school newspaper and the local papers.

☐ Have campus people who are active in the literacy program give an interview on local or campus radio.

☐ Make a videotape of people in the literacy program.

☐ If there are display cases in libraries and other campus buildings, put together a series of photographs, articles and quotes from people involved in the literacy project. Be sure to include a name and phone number if people need more information.

☐ Organize a literacy awareness day, week, or month. Invite speakers to address the institution. This is a good way for adult learners in a literacy program to participate in public relations work. Encourage faculty members to incorporate the issue of literacy into class work during the awareness period.

☐ Sponsor a slide show, video presentation, or photography exhibit focusing on literacy or the staff and learners at a community literacy project.

☐ Compile a bibliography of books and articles about literacy. Make copies available at libraries or hand them out around campus. If the librarians are willing, set aside a shelf for literacy books and information in a prominent place in the building.

☐ Sponsor an open house. If the literacy project has an office on campus, designate a couple of hours every month or every semester when people can drop in and learn about literacy.

TRAINING & SUPERVISION 8

Introduction

This chapter is not intended to give you a specific description of how to train volunteers to work with learners.

This chapter will give you overall advice about training and supervising literacy work, but it is *not* intended to give you a step-by-step description of how to train volunteers to work with learners. For specific advice about providing tutoring and teaching services to learners, you should consult a local educator or someone with a degree in adult education. In *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*, you will find a listing of literacy organizations and service providers that have developed comprehensive training programs in Basic Reading and English as a Second Language. As always, there is no need to reinvent the wheel. The simplest approach is to contact the existing organizations and use their training models.

Training

There are three phases of training: orientation, pre-service training and in-service training. If you are working with a local literacy program that will do the bulk of the training, remember that the academic calendar may be different from that of a community literacy project. You may want to provide some training and orientation at your institution. This insures that volunteers have been prepared for the project, and helps build a feeling of camaraderie among the workers.

Orientation

Before training takes place, you should think about orientation. If you are involving volunteers in tutoring projects, the training can be quite long. An orientation session which clearly defines the expectations and requirements of the literacy project can save time and can weed out people who feel that they do not have the time.

Orientation is also helpful for people who do not necessarily want to get involved at the moment but who are interested in learning more about literacy.

A typical orientation lasts about an hour and consists of a short presentation about literacy, the training that volunteers are expected to complete, and the expectations the literacy program has of the volunteers. The rest of the time can be devoted to a question and answer session. It is helpful to hand out a flyer with a contact name and address, the training dates, and some useful facts about literacy.

Pre-service training

In this area more than any other, make use of what already exists. Creating a training program of your own is time consuming. Even if there is no local literacy program in your area, groups like Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA), Laubach Literacy Action (LLA), and the Assault on Illiteracy Project (AOIP) have training series that have been designed and tested across the country. These groups have field staff who conduct training programs all over the country. For example, the LVA Basic Reading tutor training workshop, available on videotape, gives you a measure of flexibility in scheduling trainings. Call their national office to get access to the training programs.

Some advice and suggestions:

It is helpful if the training can take place on campus, but do not get so campus-based that you never make contact with the community.

It is possible to become certified as a tutor trainer. If you develop a corps of people on campus who can lead workshops, training tutors can be arranged in conjunction with the academic calendar.

In-service training

As people get involved in literacy work questions, challenges, and problems arise. Tutors especially have questions that need to be answered.

Most literacy programs have in-service seminars a couple of times a year that focus on issues such as motivating learners, reading comprehension, learning disabilities and adult learners, or how to use the newspaper as a teaching tool.

Teaching someone to read is not a simple task and is not without its share of frustrations.

In addition to formal presentations, it is helpful to have a phone network that links experienced tutors with tutors who have just started in a program. Teaching someone to read is not a simple task and is not without its share of frustrations. If new tutors have an experienced contact, the chance of tutor burnout and discouragement is lessened. A telephone contact system is also appropriate for learners in a literacy program. If conflicts occur between a tutor and a learner, it is helpful for the learner to have a neutral third party to contact.

Supervision

Are the learners being taught how to read?

Supervision is an important part of any service program. Are the expectations of the volunteers being met? Are the expectations of the local literacy programs being met? Are the lines of communication open and accessible to everyone involved? Most important, are the learners being reached, assisted, and encouraged in meaningful ways? Are the learners being taught how to read?

It is necessary to make a distinction here between the kinds of supervision demanded of different tasks. If the literacy project you have initiated at your institution links with ongoing projects in the community or simply provides services to literacy agencies, then the supervision will be less demanding. You will not be responsible for tracking the progress of learners and tutors.

If, however, you have started a literacy project which provides direct services to learners who are tutored or taught at sites on campus, then your supervisory role must increase. Learning to read is not something that can be accomplished in weeks or even months. Therefore, sustained and careful supervision of the work of the tutors and learners is very important.

Projects which work directly with local literacy programs

The amount of supervision necessary depends on what kind of project a person is involved in. If volunteers are working at local literacy programs, then the program staff should assume the role of primary supervisors. This is not to say that those people responsible for coordinating campus literacy efforts can completely abdicate responsibility for supervision. There are several ways to help supervise and maintain relations among the local program staff and learners, the college or university people who are working at the program, and those of you on campus who are organizing and recruiting workers.

☐ *Phone contact.* Be sure that there are designated people from your institution and from the local literacy project who will serve as telephone contacts. The contacts are useful if a volunteer has a problem with the local program, if the local program can not track down a volunteer, or if you want to invite the local program staff to a campus dinner or meeting. There should be a clear chain of communication.

☐ *Postcards.* If there are events that people should be aware of or if there are meetings scheduled for volunteers and other workers, you can send postcards to everyone on campus in addition to people at the local programs.

☐ *Group meetings.* Bring the volunteers and workers together and give them a chance to talk about what is going on, or what frustrations or successes they may have encountered in the last month or week.

☐ *Bulletin board.* If you have some office space for the literacy project or if there is a central campus building like a cafeteria, library or bookstore, you can arrange to have a literacy bulletin board which announces training schedules, meeting dates, and information to people in the program.

☐ *Newsletter.* Lots of literacy programs have a newsletter for volunteers, workers, and learners. You can circulate that local program's newsletter with a campus update attached.

College or university literacy programs that provide direct services to learners

A literacy program is accountable.

If you are in the business of teaching people how to read, you need to think carefully and clearly about how to maintain quality of service to your clients the learners. Remember that a literacy program is accountable to:

☐ *Organizations and individuals* that provide funds to the program;

☐ *Volunteers* involved in the literacy work;

☐ *The learners* in the program.

You will need to supervise all aspects of the program from volunteer and learner recruiting and orientation to recognition of learner achievement. Although there are lists of basic suggestions below, you will want to check *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts* to find information about managing and supervising literacy work. The literacy organizations that have been working with learners for years are the best source of advice and information on the subject of supervision.

Areas where supervision is especially vital:

Make sure that your recruiting is realistic.

☐ *Recruiting and intake*. It is important to make sure the process of recruiting learners and volunteers proceeds smoothly. Those people who are in charge of recruiting should be prepared to answer questions about everything from literacy and tutor training to the state of America's public schools. Create a standard intake form for recording information about volunteers and learners. Be aware that it can become easy to promise too much too soon to both volunteers and learners. Avoid statements like "we can get you a tutor tomorrow" or "of course you can miss three of the five training sessions." Make sure that your recruiting is realistic.

☐ *Training and orientation*. The people who are in charge of training and orientation should receive thorough training themselves. A good way to work with and train new trainers is to set up an apprentice system that pairs novice trainers with experienced workshop leaders. Most literacy programs require trainees to complete two types of evaluation forms at the end of a training course. The first form is a simple set of questions about the material covered in the workshop. It is a means to evaluate whether or not the trainees are qualified to work with learners. The second form asks questions about the workshop; if the pace was too fast or too slow; if the material was clearly presented and if the trainees have confidence in their ability to tutor. This enables the literacy program managers to keep track of the effectiveness of the training and of the workshop leaders.

Make contact on a regular basis with learners and tutors.

☐ *Tutoring and teaching*. Clearly, the supervision of teaching and tutoring is essential for any responsible program which provides direct services to learners. There should be a system in place to make contact on a regular basis with learners and tutors to ensure that progress is being made and that matches are working. Some programs administer an evaluation to learners every six months or when the learners elect to leave the program. This assessment process helps monitor learner acheivement and program effectiveness. Other programs require tutors to submit lesson plans, monthly reports of teaching activities, or time sheets.

A final suggestion for the supervision of tutoring and teaching is to have program organizers, experienced tutors, or individuals with a background in adult education sit in on a tutorial session. This should be done only after obtaining the permission of the learner. It most effective if this kind of observation takes place a few months after the tutor and learner have been matched. That amount of time should be sufficient for rapport and trust to have developed between the two individuals.

☐ *Recordkeeping.* It is important to maintain accurate records of tutor and learner progress, of tutor and learner recruiting and intake, as well as of budget expenditures and income. By designating a small committee that takes responsibility for recordkeeping from the beginning of a literacy project, you can avoid confusion in the future. Recordkeeping is of particular importance for those programs that apply for state or federal funds. Contact the local board of education for information on the forms and systems GED and ABE programs use to track progress.

Recordkeeping is of particular importance for those programs that apply for state or federal funds.

FUND DEVELOPMENT 9

Introduction

You may be involved in fundraising of one kind or another, depending on the type of literacy program you choose to organize. If your university or college is running its own program or coordinating a joint effort with other literacy programs, the first step is to assess carefully your services and your needs. If you do not know precisely what your goals are, you will have trouble recognizing all your potential resources. If your project is involved with outside agencies, on-campus needs might be fewer, but students may volunteer to help local agencies raise the funds necessary for their operations.

Assess carefully your services and your needs.

Before you try to raise money or any type of donations, decide what financial and physical resources you already have as well as what your needs will be. A careful program examination will help you evaluate your strengths and weaknesses; it will also help you explain your needs to potential donors. Do not forget that resources come in all forms—time, services, space and goods, as well as money—and from all over: individual donors, the university's board of trustees, administration, faculty and staff, alumni/ae, family and friends, neighbors, civic groups, businesses, state and federal funds, foundations, and the media.

Think about and write down what you need and how you can fill that need. If you want books and magazines for tutoring, you do not necessarily have to buy them. Students and other members of the community are always willing to donate books. If you need office space or use of a telephone, perhaps you can arrange for the use of an office or classroom at your college. If you need to pay staff members, find out about the possibility of hiring work-study students and graduate assistants. Ask the financial aid office or student employment office if it is possible to hire a student on a work-study position. Ask academic department heads if graduate assistants or fellows may be available to help you.

There is always more than one way to use a resource.

The following list reviews potential donors from large to small. It is not inclusive, but these suggestions and the bibliography attached should provide you with a starting point. The most important lesson is that there is always more than one way to use a resource. We have suggested a few ways—be creative and think of more.

Sources of Funds

Government

Federal agencies provide direct grants or direct support to student community service projects. While sources of funds and the nature of proposed grant projects may change with time, some general sources (like the Federal Register) may help you track down appropriate agencies. A number of states have also increased their appropriations for adult basic education and you may qualify for state funds. Check with other colleges, national literacy contact groups, your state department of education and local agencies for advice. You should also read the section on submitting grants to foundations and corporations below. Grants require certain obligations, like quarterly reports, and may require that your project hold appropriate liability insurance.

Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., runs a successful tutoring project for children who live in the Sursum Corda housing project. Adults and parents who lived in the project started to ask volunteer tutors if they could get help , too. Georgetown applied for and received an ACTION Student Service Learning Project grant in 1987 to begin an adult literacy project. The grant enabled Georgetown to hire a project director, who is responsible for recruiting learners, recruiting, training, and placing student volunteers, and working to build strong community ties. Georgetown's initial goal is to recruit 50 student volunteers.

A second form of assistance can come from the Federal Work-Study programs. Students who qualify for work-study receive employment on or off-campus; a part of the student's salary is paid by the hiring agency (the college or an off-campus employer) and the federal government pays the rest. The government has encouraged public service options in work-study programs and will fund up to 90% of a public service job (the other 10% is paid by the hiring agency). To facilitate such programs, institutions may use 10% of their college work-study job development funds to develop job placements in community service.

Since 1984, Princeton University in New Jersey has been part of a pilot program to use work-study money to support literacy efforts. In 1985-6, the student employment office targeted $4,000 in work-study funds for adult literacy projects; in 1986-7, funding was increased to $10,000. In 1986-7, through arrangements made with Community House, a social service program at Princeton, eighteen students' work-study jobs involved tutoring adults in the local library's tutoring program. Learners in the library's program include local townspeople and employees of the university who have been recruited by supervisors and union representatives.

Foundations and Corporations

Foundations are non-profit organizations created to support charitable, educational, religious, and other activities for the common good. Some corporations have established their own foundations for charitable giving while others allocate funds and other gifts directly, such as equipment, space, and time from the company.

Do your homework well.

If you decide to apply for grants, do your homework well. Grantors have specific interests and may target their funds to particular issues, cities, or regions. Research potential sources of grants. Use the resources provided in this section's bibliography, the library, and local business directories. The most important resource you may have is your college's development office, which is staffed with professional fundraisers who may be more than willing to contribute their advice to your project.

A grant is not a free lunch; it is given in return for an action promised by you.

Seeking grants from any source can be a very time consuming project. Before you apply for a grant, weigh the issues involved. A grant is not a free lunch; it is given in return for an action promised by you. Granting agencies demand accountability. Responsibilities can include preparing evaluations, filing reports, demonstrating expenditures, and other forms of accounting. In addition, grants cannot be renewed indefinitely; they may be helpful for seed money or for specific projects, but not to continue operations. Before you spend time working on grant proposals, ask yourself whether you can find other types of renewable resources to support your funding needs.

A number of guides give good clear advice on how to prepare a grant proposal (see bibliography at the end of this chapter). Read as much as you can about obtaining and preparing a grant application and get expert advice. Have as many critics—people unfamiliar and familiar with the project—as possible look over your proposal before you submit it.

Business

Corporations and local businesses may be able to provide a lot more than money for your project. As with grants, there are rules and guidelines about how to approach business sources. An introduction to these procedures can be found in some of the guidebooks listed in this chapter's bibliography.

Some of the aid that businesses can provide include:

☐ *Charitable donations of funds*. Many businesses contribute regularly to a variety of causes, and do not require the same time-consuming reporting procedures as grantmaking agencies. Though these gifts are not grants, they may require some form of application. Do research about local businesses; check your yellow pages and talk with the Chamber of Commerce.

☐ *Donations of equipment or use of resources*. These donations are known as "gifts in kind," and can come in all forms: space for tutoring and meetings, books, office equipment, computer time and hardware. Old stationery supplies and office forms like message pads can help adult learners study functional literacy skills. Gifts-In-Kind, a branch of the United Way, can provide valuable assistance.

In one city, an advertising agency offered the state department of education a $75,000 line of credit to help create a literacy campaign in the media. Although an atypical gift, many advertising agencies, printers and typesetters may be willing to help you in other ways in your efforts. Contact firms that do regular business with your institution and ask if they contribute any services. If your institution's publications office is using a printer for a large job, the printer may be able to "tag on" a small job for your project at little or no cost.

☐ *Donations of time and services*. Employee expertise can provide you with invaluable assistance. Printing services and pro bono advertising work can help promote your effort. Educational and legal advice are always welcome. Transportation is also a help.

In Philadelphia, the evening newspaper, the Philadelphia Daily News, prints a column for adult readers three times a week. Written at a more basic level than most newspaper stories, "The Savvy Reader" helps students of all ages understand the important news stories by providing analysis, references to other articles in the paper, and questions

☐ *Marketing or fundraising campaigns.* We are all familiar with campaigns that advertise "buy our product and we will donate one dollar to a specific charity or cause." Literacy is a particularly attractive issue for many businesses. Organized through a local retailer or manufacturer, marketing campaigns provide an excellent source of public awareness as well as funds. Approach local businesses that depend on university or college trade. Marketing campaigns are a two-way street; the business gets good publicity, increased business, and free advertising from your efforts, and you benefit from their donation.

For each paperback copy of Jonathan Kozol's Illiterate America *sold, New American Library donates a portion of the selling price to Laubach Literacy International, Literacy Volunteers of New York City, and Push Literacy Action Now.*

Why not launch a smaller scale operation through a local merchant? On one particular day or item, the store can donate one cent —or ten cents—out of every dollar earned to your campaign or to a local agency.

Employers and businesses of all types have a vested interest in the literacy of their workers and their customers. A wide variety of corporations have been involved in literacy issues. Types of businesses that have supported literacy programs include:

insurance companies;
booksellers;
publishers;
newspapers;
printers;
banks;
food services and food production companies;
communication companies;
computer companies.

Your institution

Universities and colleges can provide the greatest help to your efforts not only by providing endorsements and moral support but through supporting your fundraising efforts and offering gifts of time and space. Resources within the university include:

Gifts in kind

These may be the most valuable of all college resources. Possibilities include:

☐ *Use of empty classrooms for teaching or tutoring.* Many colleges will have vacant classrooms during the evening or off-hours when literacy tutors can meet with students.

☐ *Office space to house the administration of a literacy project.* Create a learning center or a library of teaching materials for tutors.

☐ *Library time.* Many learners in adult literacy programs are unfamiliar with libraries. Libraries can provide quiet places to read as well as exciting places to learn about books.

☐ *Computer time and expertise.* A practical session using learning software or word-processing can be very helpful for many adult students. Computer instruction can be very useful in providing job and reading skills. While computer resources may be tight on many campuses, there may be some free time to introduce an adult learner to a computer. Or you may be able to arrange to usethe computers in the education department, computer center, or other locations on a weekly basis.

☐ *Do not forget the two greatest gifts: time and expertise.* As mentioned, a development office can provide help with fundraising by providing reference materials, advice on grant proposals, direct mail appeals, phone-a-thons, alumni/ae appeals, and mailing lists.

Just as businesses and community members are valuable resources, faculty, administrators, students, and staff can all provide a wide range of assistance. A graduate student or faculty member may be able to help you set up a method of evaluating your volunteers or your program, or lend professional experience to your publicity and outreach efforts.

In Arizona, two recent graduates of Northern Arizona University with communications experience worked together on an internship to create a PSA (public service announcement) about literacy for local television stations.

Student funds

Disbursed through thestudent activities office, student government or the deans' offices, funds may be used to support public service projects in a variety of ways: covering costs for office supplies, books, tutor training, or transportation. Many college presidents control discretionary funds; a written request and a personal appeal may result in valuable operating funds.

Work-study

You can make literacy work a possibility and even a priority for work-study students.

Set up a meeting with the financial aid or student employment director to discuss work-study positions in community service. Find out how community work and on-campus jobs are funded by College Work-Study, and how you can make arrangements for a community or campus agency to hire a work-study student. (See *Chapter 10: Program Profiles* for examples of campuses that use work-study positions for literacy activities). By making literacy work a possibility and even a priority for work-study students, financial aid and employment officers can make service opportunities feasible for those who work while in school.

Direct Fundraising

The most common and effective fundraisers are generally the most direct. Whatever you plan, here are a few essentials:

☐ Be organized.

☐ Get dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers.

☐ Decide why you are raising funds. Why does your project need money (or other resources)? Plan how you will use the funds before you raise them.

Examples of fundraising projects that might be appropriate to literacy campaigns may include the traditional standbys: raffles, dinners and parties, concerts, rummage sales, dance marathons, flower sales, and car washes. Other ideas can raise money as well as advertise your particular cause in a meaningful way.

☐ *Used textbook sales.* Create a slogan that emphasizes the connection between books and literacy: "Buy a book and help someone learn to read."

☐ *Coindrops near bookstore registers.* Make the connection between the place and the cause. The "Give the Gift of Literacy" campaign in many college bookstores across the country provides brochures and information on illiteracy and the fundraising campaign to benefit literacy agencies.

☐ *Sales of T-shirts* printed with the local literacy hotline number.

☐ *Donations from sales.* Persuade your college bookstore to donate a percentage of a day's sales to your cause. Then, make an appeal on campus and encourage everyone to buy books. Better yet, persuade your library to donate a certain day's overdue fines and get all your friends to return their library books.

☐ *Chapter 5: Taking Action* has a number of additional fundraising ideas in the section on "Program Ideas for Everyone."

There are two sides to fundraising: what the donor gives you and what you give the donor.

In all events, remember that there are always two sides to fundraising: what the donor gives you, and what you give the donor. You may be receiving some valuable operating support, but you are also serving part of your mission by informing the community about illiteracy, getting others involved in the issue, and making individuals in your community feel that they can help.

Welcome and thank those who help you.

Learn from your successes and from your failures. Fundraising is hard work. Above all, be sure that you know your own needs and that you welcome and thank those who help you.

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Giving USA, by American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, Inc., 25 West 43rd Street, New York, NY 10036.

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Foundation Grants Index Bimonthly, published by The Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Avenue, Box CE, New York, NY 10003, 212/620-4230.

Foundation News, published bimonthly by the Council on Foundations, 1828 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

The Grantsmanship Center NEWS, published six times per year by The Grantsmanship Center, 1031 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90015.

Grassroots Fundraising Journal, P.O. Box 14754, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Nonprofit World Report, published bimonthly by The Society for Nonprofit World Organizations, 6314 Odana Road, Suite 1, Madison, WI 53719.

The Philanthropy Monthly, published by Non-profit Report, P.O. Box 989, New Milford, CT 06776.

Organizations

Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, 35th floor, New York, NY 10020, 212/512-2415.

Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), 11 Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036.

Gifts-in-Kind, United Way of America, 701 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-2088.

The Grantsmanship Center, 1031 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90015.

Independent Sector, 1828 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Also see *Chapter 12: Resources and Contacts*.

PROGRAM PROFILES 10

Introduction

These programs represent a range of organizational structures.

Examples of twelve programs which involve college or university community members in literacy work are contained in this chapter. In researching and compiling the programs, an effort was made to show the variety of ways that college and university community members are already working to increase literacy in local communities and on campus. In addition, the programs included in this section represent a range of organizational structures from informal partnerships between individuals to specific agreements among several agencies and institutions.

The programs highlighted are:

Boston University —The Collaborations for Literacy project is a comprehensive intergenerational program run by the Boston University School of Education. Collaborations for Literacy matches work-study students with adult learners and their children.

Brevard Community College —The Brevard program is an example of how a community college has worked to provide Adult Basic Education and basic skills classes for an entire county through an "Open Campus" system.

Macalester College —At Macalester, an individual student organized a program that encourages work-study students and volunteers to serve in nearby community literacy projects.

Mary Baldwin College —Mary Baldwin College's literacy project is an informal partnership between the college and a local correctional facility.

Northwestern University —Organization Working for a Literate Society (OWLS), a student run program, places undergraduate tutors in projects at an alternative high school and a volunteer literacy program in Chicago.

College at Oswego, State University of New York —Literacy Volunteers of Oswego is an example of how a college can set up a chapter of a national volunteer literacy organization.

Rice University —Rice University offers a number of volunteer opportunities in literacy programs that focus on adult and teenage new readers through Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP).

Seattle University —The Adult Literacy Project housed at Seattle University was initiated by a faculty member and now employs a full-time director.

Stanford University —The Stanford Latino Literacy Project is an English as a Second Language (ESL) program which provides tutorial services to food service workers and managers.

University of Pennsylvania —At the University of Pennsylvania, a commitment to literacy is reflected in the efforts of the president, faculty members at School of Education as well as undergraduates who work as volunteers.

VISTA volunteer, Michael MacKillop —Michael MacKillop, a recent college graduate, serves as a VISTA volunteer at a statewide literacy program.

Yale University —The Yale Adult Literacy Volunteer Project trains members of Yale's staff, faculty, and administration to serve as volunteer tutors.

Boston University

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

For years, parents have read stories to their children. While many Americans still continue that tradition, millions do not because they cannot—they are illiterate. When a parent is unable to read, he or she often cannot provide the educational guidance and support his or her child needs. As a result, the child is faced with the possibility of inheriting reading problems similar to those of the parent. The Boston University School of Education has developed a program specifically designed to meet the needs of these "at-risk" parents and their "at-risk" children.*

The program attempts to promote adult literacy and break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy.

Boston University's Collaborations For Literacy: An Intergenerational Literacy Project attempts to promote adult literacy and, at the same time, break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy. The Collaborations project was initiated in 1983 as part of the national Adult Literacy Initiative. The philosophy behind the program is based on the idea that the "at-risk" parent and the "at-risk" child can be instructed as a learning unit, rather than as individuals with separate learning difficulties. Parents are encouraged to read to their children as part of this educative process.

"We saw it [the Collaborations project] in the research," explains Dr. Ruth Nickse, the Collaborations project director. Designed by Boston University (BU) faculty and students, the project allows the BU School of Education to investigate the effectiveness of intergenerational learning; provides job opportunities for BU work-study student tutors; and has become a model program for the U.S. Department of Education (BU was one of 18 colleges and universities asked, in 1983, to establish a model program). During 1986-87, the Collaborations Literacy Project employed approximately 20 student tutors who instructed 40-50 adult non-readers.

The Collaborations Project encourages partnerships at all levels of organization: those between Boston University and community organizations; those between staff persons and tutors; those between tutors and learners; and those between parents (learners) and their children. The following paragraphs explain each partnership.

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* Most information concerning the Collaborations Project was taken from "At-Risk Parents: Collaborations for Literacy, An Intergenerational Reading Project"; by Ruth S. Nickse and Nancy Englander; *Equity and Choice*, Vol.1, #3; pp. 11-18.

Boston University and Community Organizations

BU works closely with the Boston Public Schools, Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts, and the Boston Public Library - Brighton Branch.

☐ Jackson-Mann School, a member of the Boston Public Schools, offers adult basic education classes and, therefore is an ideal "referral service" for the BU project—staff persons at the school recommend the literacy project to those who need reading instruction outside of the classroom.

☐ Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts also refers potential learners to the BU project. BU work-study students interested in literacy tutoring participate in an 18 hour training session administered by Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts. Upon completion of the training session, the Collaborations administrators match each tutor with a learner.

☐ Boston Public Library - Brighton Branch facilitates some of the tutoring sessions and offers an extensive book collection—including over 14,500 children's books—to the surrounding community.

Cooperation with community organizations, services, and schools is important to the success of this project. Each group provides a variety of resources necessary to promote adult literacy.

Collaborations Staff and Student Tutors

The Collaborations staff selects work-study students interested in instructing adult non-readers. Part of the federal Adult Literacy Initiative encourages the use of work-study students as tutors. Student tutors also take part in weekly in-service training sessions, which give them an opportunity to discuss tutoring experiences and methods of teaching with other tutors. Frequently, guest speakers explain developments in the field of adult education and discuss topics related to adult basic education. The seminar, conducted by the project's director and faculty advisors, may be taken for academic credit.

Tutors and Learners

After BU students have completed the initial training workshop, they are assigned two adult learners with whom they meet individually for three hours a week. Each tutor and learner pair arranges a time and place most convenient for the weekly sessions. Instructional materials include not only children's books, but adult books geared toward occupational opportunities as well as functional literacy materials (i.e., cookbooks or instructional manuals) selected by individual learners. Audio/visual equipment is also used as part of the learning process.

Parents (Learners) and Children

Adults who choose to learn through the intergenerational methods add another aspect to their learning process: their children. Often, parents read aloud to their children or work with them in other ways. One learner describes how her children are involved with her education: "I don't like to make sentences, because I'm lacking of reading , so I say 'Marvin, you make me ten sentences, and Lisa, you make me another ten (Lisa is 14 and Marvin is 10) and then I read them over and put them together. There are words that we have to look up in the dictionary—she does it, and I check it (even though I'm the one who is supposed to be doing it!) but I'm [busy] cooking—we work together." *

It should be pointed out that all learners do not participate in the intergenerational aspects of this project; some non-readers learn to read using methods other than those developed for the parent-child unit.

In the spring of 1987, the Boston University School of Education opened the Family Learning Center, an adult basic education facility that incorporates aspects of the Collaborations Project. Though the original literacy project was successful, project directors and administrators saw the need to expand it into a full-time program equipped with full-time staff and located at a permanent tutoring site. The new center not only provides reading instruction for adults, but plans to include training in and experience with adult basic education for BU undergraduates and graduate students; development of materials for

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*Reprinted with permission from staff at the Family Learning Center, Boston, MA both adult learners and for literacy tutors; research on intergenerational literacy approaches; and provision of materials regarding literacy instruction and research developments.

Through the Collaborations Project, which has been incorporated into the Family Learning Center, BU has served more than 200 adult non-readers and their children in the past four years. Now, through the Family Learning Center, the Collaborations Project will be able to meet the needs of many more community members who are educationally disadvantaged. By working together on all levels, from those that are personal as well as organizational, the Boston University School of Education has been able to successfully promote literacy in the Boston area.

For more information, contact:

Collaborations for Literacy
Family Learning Center
832 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston University
Brookline, MA 02146

Brevard Community College

A literacy program serving thousands of individuals in a single county.

Brevard Community College is a model of how a community college can run literacy programs serving thousands of individuals. Under the leadership of Dr. Maxwell C. King, the college is committed to increasing literacy in Cocoa County. In 1982, Brevard took over the local adult education program that had been run by the Cocoa County school district. As Dean Elizabeth Singer recalls, "The president told me: 'Literacy is a first priority. We want to reach everyone in this community.' " Brevard's efforts have been so successful that the college has been named one of the top literacy programs in Florida.

Brevard's adult education program is run through the Open Campus, a division of the college that also offers continuing education and community education courses at a number of sites throughout Cocoa County. The adult education program offers both an Adult Basic Education (ABE) and a high-school completion/GED program for adults. Special classes are available for the learning disabled. The ABE program alone serves between 4,000 and 5,000 adults each term. All together, there are between ten and fifteen thousand participants in the adult education program every year.

Brevard hires professional teachers to teach classes in the adult education division. Dean Singer trains many of the ABE teachers herself; GED teachers are certified by the state. Volunteers from the local Laubach Literacy council teach in the program. Brevard faculty members also provide assistance by offering in-service workshops on topics such as classroom management and curriculum to teachers and tutors. In addition, work-study students enrolled in Brevard's traditional academic program have taught in the adult education program.

Brevard works in cooperation with a variety of other local agencies to recruit students and meet their needs. Adult literacy classes are located at schools, churches, and other sites in local communities. The local housing authority, for example, has provided free use of several teaching sites. Donation of bus service has made it possible for learners who have completed ABE classes to come to Brevard's main campus for vocational testing and placement.

At the heart of Brevard's successful efforts is a corps of ABE Teacher-Recruiter-Counselors (TRCs). The TRCs work in local communities to recruit and retain students in the literacy program. TRCs come from the communities where they serve and are chosen for their knowledge and experience in community work.

Part of Brevard's work is supported by state allocation of federal ABE funding and the remainder is paid for by the college itself. Brevard has been very active in creating demonstration projects through a program that ensures that 10% of federal monies designated for literacy be allocated for special demonstration projects and teacher training models. One of the most important of these model projects has been Basic Education Skills Through Parent Affective Learning (BEST-PAL), a parenting education program for local communities. A fundamental goal of BEST-PAL is to provide basic reading and writing instruction in its parenting classes. Some of the parents involved in the program are illiterate to some degree. The Teacher-Recruiter-Counselors (TRCs) can work with parents not only to build parenting skills but to encourage parents to enroll in literacy programs.

The BEST-PAL program provides parents with learning guides (on such topics as love and affection, family crisis, and sex education) that are easy to understand because they have clear pictorials and easy reading levels. In class, teachers help parents build their reading vocabulary and writing skills. BEST-PAL has not only helped Brevard recruit students for adult literacy programs; according to Dean Singer, "It has been a great way to recruit for the college!" Students who might not have considered returning to school for a college degree are encouraged by TRCs in the parenting program to pursue their education.

Brevard plans to increase its involvement in recruiting, counseling and placement through its new Center for Adult Literacy, which was funded by a state lottery and will open in the fall of 1987. The Center will work closely with the college's other divisions to strengthen literacy programs throughout the county. Dean Singer plans to involve more Brevard students from the college's undergraduate body in the new operations.

For more information, contact:

Dean Elizabeth Singer, Adult/Continuing Education
Brevard Community College, Cocoa Campus
Cocoa, FL 32922

Macalester College

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

A one-man effort to promote awareness of and involvement with the literacy issue.

Jonathan Hubschman's work-study assignment was not just another job. Though it may have started out that way, it soon evolved into a one-man effort to promote awareness of and involvement with the literacy issue. When Hubschman, a 1987 graduate of Macalester College, discovered that he could use his Federal work-study time as a literacy tutor, he decided to get involved. Through the Macalester Career Development Center, Hubschman was connected with the Minnesota Literacy Council (MLC) where he was trained as a tutor. He then decided to work at the Technology for Literacy Center (TLC), an adult learning center that uses computers and technological learning materials for assistance in educational instruction.

Hubschman's involvement with TLC went beyond literacy tutoring; he became a TLC intern as well. He also decided that his fellow students needed to increase their awareness of the literacy problem in order to become actively involved in the issue. In the fall of 1986, Hubschman posted flyers around the Macalester campus, announcing an informational meeting on literacy. The flyers attracted approximately 45 students to the meeting. Those who wanted to better understand the literacy issue were provided with appropriate information and those who wanted to give their time to the cause were provided with the necessary contacts. "My role [was] to facilitate getting information on literacy to students and then to get them involved with the issue, to hook them up," explains Hubschman.

Hubschman acted as the link between interested Macalester students and the Minnesota Literacy Council, referring interested students to the Council. Although he was not working for the Council, he organized tutor training sessions on the Macalester campus with the help of the MLC. Students also participated in tutor training workshops administered by the MLC and, upon completion of the workshops, were placed in the literacy program of their choice.

As a result of Hubschman's efforts, literacy involvement is no longer limited to Federal work-study students—it now includes volunteers as well. As he says, "Work-study students have an added incentive to get involved—they're getting paid. But the opportunity has to be open to anyone."

Hubschman operated the project on a low budget—proof that little money is needed to organize a successful program. However, when he did need money to provide transportation for the volunteers, he requested and received funds from the provost of the college. With the money, he was able to purchase bus tokens for the tutors as well as to arrange ride-sharing for women who wanted to travel in pairs.

After Hubschman referred students to the MLC, he kept in contact with them as needed. Although he periodically checked up on the student tutors, he stresses that students did not work with him after they had been placed in a tutoring position; they discussed problems or shared ideas with the organization for which they worked. Throughout the past year, Hubschman arranged tutor placements for approximately 20-25 Macalester students . In his effort to keep interest alive, Hubschman has passed the project over to another student who will maintain the program next year.

Although Hubschman's efforts to involve students in the literacy issue are highly commendable, he is quite modest about what he has done. "I set up the coordination activities in a week. It takes a lot of energy and a sense of urgency to get it done. I'm just helping others take the first steps." His efforts are founded on the belief that "Liberal arts colleges have an obligation to reach out." Whether it is an obligation or not, students at Macalester are reaching out and sharing their reading abilities with others.

"Liberal arts colleges have an obligation to reach out."

For more information, contact:

Technology for Literacy Center
580 University Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103

Mary Baldwin College

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

Week after week, students from Mary Baldwin College (MBC) return to the Staunton Correctional Facility to provide supplemental tutorial assistance for a number of prison inmates. Unlike many literacy volunteers, Mary Baldwin students do not participate in a structured literacy or community service program; rather, they work through an arrangement made between David Cary, an MBC professor of sociology, and Richard Massey, the school principal at the prison.

"It is strictly ad hoc between the professor and myself."

According to Massey, in the late 1970s, an MBC student interested in adult literacy approached Professor Cary and asked about tutoring possibilities in the Staunton area. Cary proceeded to contact Massey and arranged for the student to spend time volunteering at the correctional facility. Since then, other MBC students who have shown an interest in tutoring have done so through Professor Cary's connection with Mr. Massey. As Massey points out, "It is strictly ad hoc between the professor and myself. If we structure it more, we'll be less productive."

Throughout the years, the number of tutors involved in the arrangement has ranged from as few as one to as many as five. The time commitment the students make varies from one individual to another. Usually, a tutor will commit a semester at a time and work a couple of hours each week. Some MBC students tutor as part of an independent study assignment or other school-related project and are eligible to receive credit for their work.

Since the prison runs a school attended by 100 of its 550 inmates, most of the material with which tutors work complements the learner's regular class work. The teachers at the prison school administer the tutor training, provide supervision, and consult with the volunteers on the progress of the learners. Students can tutor one-to-one with an inmate or help in the classroom during regular class times. To be tutored by an MBC student is a kind of reward: prison teachers choose those inmates who put forth the greatest amount of effort in the classroom. Massey points out that the inmates look forward to their tutoring sessions and to contact with "the visitors from the outside."

"Kay was not only my tutor, but also my friend."

Learner Linwood Herring speaks positively of his experience with an MBC tutor. "I really enjoyed working with Kay [tutor]. We worked mostly on reading; we would read together—she'd read a portion of the book and then I'd read. If I had trouble pronouncing a word she'd help me and if I came to a word that I didn't know, we'd look it up and write it down." Herring knows that the twice-weekly tutoring sessions helped him with his reading skills but, he points out that Kay "was not only my tutor, but also my friend. She has a nice personality and I really enjoyed working with her."

For more information, contact:

Richard Massey
Principal
P.O. 3500
Staunton Correctional Center
Staunton, VA 24401

Northwestern University

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

Students have developed and established Organization Working for a Literate Society (OWLS).

In 1985, Jonathan Kozol, author of *Illiterate America*, spoke at Northwestern University. He not only spoke; he inspired many students with his emotional appeal for a literate America. Several months after Kozol spoke at the university, the director of Literacy Volunteers of Chicago arrived on campus, and described how students could give their time as volunteers tutors. Since then, Northwestern students have developed and established Organization Working for a Literate Society (OWLS). The program, conceived and established by students, organizes regular tutor training programs, provides tutor placement services, and works to increase awareness about the adult literacy issue.

In its first year, OWLS trained 70 Northwestern students to tutor adult learners in both Basic Reading and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. The program operates in conjunction with Prologue—an alternative high-school program associated with Literacy Volunteers of Chicago. Northwestern students who are interested in working with adult learners at Prologue participate in a tutor training program at Prologue.

When the volunteers have completed the 12 hour training requirement, Francine Farina, the Prologue coordinator, matches the student tutors with adult learners. Prologue then supervises the tutoring sessions which are held once a week for two hours. Farina points out that the one-to-one tutoring sessions complement the regular course work of the adult learners. Currently, Farina is developing a training program in order to meet the specific needs of Northwestern student tutors. Because students have tight schedules, the length of the training program will decrease from 12 hours to 9 hours. The revised training method will combine the previous training techniques with new ones geared to the specific needs of the OWLS/Prologue program.

Many Northwestern students choose to work with adults whose knowledge of English is limited and are therefore trained as ESL tutors. ESL training takes place on campus and is directed by students qualified to administer tutor workshops. Tutors and learners are matched by contacts at Literacy Volunteers of Chicago and OWLS. The tutoring sessions are then held on the Northwestern campus and, like the meetings at Prologue, take place once a week for approximately two hours.

OWLS offers other volunteer opportunities for Northwestern students interested in literacy. Its board of directors, comprised solely of students, publishes a quarterly newsletter to keep participants and other interested parties informed of activities and developments within the organization. According to Howard Crystal, former co-president of OWLS, the newsletter also provides a "tutor network" for students volunteering within the program. Although there are presently no faculty or administrative members working with OWLS, Crystal hopes that they will be able to recruit an interested faculty member to serve as an advisor. "We would like and definitely need an advisor who is actively involved in what we're doing."

OWLS annually receives $1,000 from the university, as all Northwestern student organizations do. Since Prologue is in close proximity to Northwestern, student tutors use the public transportation system to get to and from the learning center.

Giving one's time to help someone else brings the greatest satisfaction of all.

While tutors are awarded a certificate upon completing the sessions, both Farina and Crystal agree that giving one's time to help someone else brings the greatest satisfaction of all. Farina speaks highly of the Northwestern volunteers with whom she has worked, praising their enthusiasm, energy, and interest. Just recently, she received letters from two Northwestern students thanking her for the experience. Clearly, a little awareness can make a big difference.

For more information, contact:

Francine Farina
Prologue, Inc.
1105 West Lawrence Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640

College at Oswego—SUNY

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

From the outset, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County has joined together the local and college communities in an effort to promote adult literacy. Work began in June 1984 when the Student Association President of the State University of New York, College at Oswego (SUNY Co Oswego) became interested in establishing a Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) affiliate on the Oswego campus. With the help of the local senior citizen volunteer program, he wrote a proposal to ACTION in which he requested the services of a VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) volunteer to help establish the program. Not only did ACTION grant the request for a volunteer, but the LVA affiliate was established and is now coordinated by Pat Kardash, the VISTA volunteer who worked to link local and college community resources.

The program, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County, encourages both college students and community members to volunteer as literacy tutors. As the coordinator, Pat Kardash, points out, "The office just happens to be on campus. There is no separation between the community program and the college program." This situation allows college students the opportunity to work with community members not only on a tutor/learner basis, but also as fellow volunteers.

College students have the opportunity to work with community members not only on a tutor/learner basis, but also as fellow volunteers.

When asked how many Oswego students participate in the program, Kardash replied that she does not break the tutors up that way—meaning that community members and college students are all regarded as literacy tutors, rather than as "student" tutors and "community" tutors. Kardash does estimate that approximately 17 student tutors have participated in the LV of Oswego County program.

Those interested in tutoring through the Oswego program have the choice of attending a training workshop held at any local Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) affiliate. The LVA group located at Oswego offers the 18 hour training session in September, primarily to encourage student participation. The training program, administered by Kardash, gives tutors concrete material with which to work when instructing learners. Students and community members interested in working with limited English-speaking adults can also be trained as English As a Second Language (ESL) tutors.

In order to recruit Oswego students to volunteer as literacy tutors, the organization distributes materials in the new student packets and has a special bulletin board on which pertinent information is posted. Each month, Kardash contacts tutors who volunteer with her program to ensure that there are no problems between the learner and tutor that impede the learning process.

Kardash explains that a number of learners have problems in addition to that of illiteracy. The majority of learners are referred to the program by various human service organizations. LV of Oswego County works closely with the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), a service that offers basic adult education classes, vocational training, and continuing education programs. Some tutors are matched with BOCES learners and, because BOCES has classroom sites at the college, meet weekly on the campus for two, one-hour sessions.

Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County receives part of its funding from an allocation to the Community Services Project, a student group at SUNY Co Oswego. LVof Oswego County occupies an office in the Student Association building as an in-kind donation from the college. In addition, the college provides space for some of the weekly tutoring sessions. Presently, Kardash is the only paid staff person working with this organization, although she works closely with students who volunteer to help with the organization of the program.

In the future, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego County hopes to offer more opportunities to its learner population. Currently, LV of Oswego sponsors a meeting for learners where they can discuss their educational experiences with one another. Another opportunity the organization gives to its learners is the confidence and ability to use the college library. Some, reports Kardash, have ventured into and used the campus library facilities. It is only a matter of time before others do the same.

For more information, contact:

Pat Kardash
Literacy Volunteers of Oswego
Community Services
Hewitt Union
SUNY Co Oswego
Oswego, NY 13126

Dr. George Bilicic
President, Literacy Volunteers of Oswego
Dean of Continuing Education
Room 610
Culkin Hall
SUNY Co Oswego
Oswego, NY 13126

Rice University

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

The project offers a variety of tutoring experiences in the community and on campus.

Jim Mustacchia, an initiator of Rice University's literacy project, remembers that efforts to start the program "called for creativity." In the fall of 1986, Mustacchia, the coordinator of the Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP), worked with other Rice students particularly interested in the literacy issue to establish the program. The Rice University project offers a variety of tutoring opportunities both in the community and on campus. Students interested in tutoring have the option to choose where they tutor, who they tutor, and with what materials they work.

Although Rice students can work with adult English-speaking non-readers, they also have the opportunity to work with older refugee students at Bel Air High School, with runaway/homeless children at the Covenant House, or with adult, limited-English speaking refugees at the local YMCA. The local programs are not affiliated with one another, so placement of Rice volunteers is coordinated and managed under the auspices of RSVP.

Rice students who tutor adult non-readers volunteer with the campus-based literacy project. Through this project, Rice students are trained as literacy tutors on the campus and are then matched with adult learners who are recruited through the local READ council, a Houston umbrella organization for literacy. The twice-weekly, one-to-one sessions are held in a Rice classroom or in the library and last for approximately one hour. Houston Community College provides some of the materials used for instruction. According to Mustacchia, this specific project is the most challenging one offered through Rice. "This project is the least structured. Most of the students [learners] are poor and experience difficult life circumstances; family problems are prevalent. To them, literacy is just one more difficult thing to deal with."

Rice students who work with older adolescents can do so in conjunction with Bel Air High School. English as a Second Language (ESL) training for the program takes place on campus, after which tutors are assigned a learner. Bel Air teachers identify refugee students who experience difficulty with their regular course work; tutor-learner matches are then made through the Rice student director who coordinates the scheduling with the Bel Air principal. Once a week, a Rice van transports the high-school students to the University for four-hour tutoring sessions. In contrast to the campus-based literacy project, tutors work with learners in English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction.

For those students who work with adults in ESL instruction, Rice offers tutoring opportunities at the local YMCA. Interested Rice students participate in ESL training at Houston Community College and are then matched with a learner at the YMCA. Tutors give basic ESL instruction to limited-English speaking adult refugees and immigrants. Such instruction helps the learners to improve their English language skills and, ultimately, helps them adjust to life in America. Tutors use Rice University cars to get to and from the tutoring site.

Finally, students who work with the young can tutor runaways and homeless youth at Covenant House, a crisis support center for troubled children. With a staff of twenty-two full-time teachers, classes at the shelter are held six days a week. Tutors help with remedial instruction and work with limited-English speaking students in ESL as well. For the necessary ESL training, Rice students attend training sessions at the YMCA.

Students act as liaisons between the tutors and the community organizations with which they collaborate.

Rice students are involved in the literacy projects in roles other than tutors; they contribute their time and energy in many ways. For example, in 1988, while Mustacchia will oversee the projects, students will act as liaisons between the tutors and the community organizations with which they collaborate. Interestingly enough, students also help fund the projects. As part of an agreement between the administration, students, and RSVP, all Rice students pay $2 in support of RSVP and the University president matches the total sum.

An important aspect of the Rice literacy program is the relationship established between Rice and the Houston community. Through the collaborations between the university and local community, more people have become actively involved in the literacy issue and, as a result, more non-readers have received the instruction and attention they desperately need. The organizations associated with the literacy program provide students with resources like training sessions, materials, tutoring sites, and learners. In return, Mustacchia serves on a number of community boards and committees including the Mayor's Task Force on Literacy and the Advisory Board to the READ Council. These contacts provide access to and communication with the Houston community.

Because the program is complex, the initiators encountered some problems in their endeavors to establish it. Although the community was very receptive to the students' desire to promote literacy, Mustacchia notes that there were frustrations and problems with learner drop-out. Transportation also proved to be somewhat difficult to coordinate, as there were numerous people to transport and places to go.

Next fall, Rice will offer a one credit class structured to increase literacy awareness and encourage active participation in the issue. The course will include presentations by persons prominent in the field of literacy, a study of existing teaching methods, and an examination of the political and sociological ramifications of literacy. But, the real focus of the class is on the students' reactions to the literacy issue and their reflections on the tutoring experience. As Mustacchia points out, "Literacy tutoring is a personal commitment that requires students to reflect." The class will allow students to examine the implications of their literacy work from various perspectives.

"Literacy tutoring is a personal commitment that requires students to reflect."

For more information, please contact:

Jim Mustacchia
Rice University
Office of Student Activities
P.O. Box 1892
Houston, Tx 77251

Seattle University

Seattle University's Adult Literacy Program serves adult learners in several low-income Seattle neighborhoods. The program trains volunteer tutors, works with community groups to recruit learners, and provides resources and tutoring space.

The idea for the project began when the research of an economics professor in the business school indicated that poverty and unemployment in the U.S. had a strong correlation with an individual's education. Thinking about ways to put his research into action, the professor teamed up with an English professor who headed the University's continuing education program. Together, they created a proposal for a literacy program to be run by Seattle University. Based on their proposal, the Adult Literacy Program began in September 1986 with initial funds from the Society of Jesus and Sisters of Providence.

The program has become a resource and training center for the entire Seattle literacy community.

A full-time director, who is an experienced literacy professional, runs the program. In its first year of operation, the program trained and certified 130 volunteer tutors, far exceeding the original goal of 30 volunteers. Much of the credit for this achievement goes to the hard work and high expectations of the director. The tutors include students, staff members, faculty, alumni/ae, and community volunteers. Because the project offers monthly training sessions, it has become a resource and training center for the entire Seattle literacy community. Over 50 people tutor through Seattle University's program. Others have been placed in literacy programs throughout the community. Volunteers also help run program operations, such as checking learner and tutor progress.

Seattle University students earn two credits (slightly less than half the credit of a full course) per quarter for tutoring. First-year students through seniors may enroll in the class. Each student meets at least twice a week with a client, tutors for at least three hours and is responsible for class preparations. Tutors also meet with faculty members to discuss their experiences and evaluate the program.

The Seattle University program has worked to build strong support on both a grass roots and institutional level. By maintaining contact with local churches and social service agencies, the program has worked to make full use of the knowledge and contacts of community agencies and to gain the trust of community members in existing programs. The Adult Literacy Program works closely with area churches which assist by publicizing the program in church bulletins and from the pulpit, taking phone calls, raising money, and having outreach ministers recruit for the program.

With services like clothing banks and food programs, the Adult Literacy Program has set up partnerships to advertise its efforts. The Seattle University program also trains volunteers for other literacy programs, provides a resource center of learning materials, answers tutor questions, and provides public speakers.

The Project's Advisory Board helps with fundraising, publicity, and planning. Over 20 individuals of diverse talents and interest, including a number of faculty members, serve on the board. The economics professor who first proposed the program now chairs the board and is in charge of fundraising. Other board members include local businesspeople, who have provided a wide variety of assistance and advice. An executive from a Seattle financial center, for example, helped the Adult Literacy Project obtain donated services to design, write, and produce a brochure.

The Adult Literacy Project has publicized its efforts through the University's alumni/ae magazine, catalog, campus newspaper, and faculty/staff newsletter. The president of Seattle University's commitment to public service has been publicized through public speeches, such as a convocation speech, and demonstrated through the commitment of University resources to the project. Some of the important support the University provides includes space in campus buildings, use of the media center, a center for resource materials, and safe parking.

For more information, contact:

Olivia de la Garza Puccia, Director
Adult Literacy Project
Office of Continuing Education
Seattle University
Seattle, WA 98122

Stanford University

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

"I didn't have to do much of a selling job," says Pedro Castaneda, referring to the adult literacy program he initiated at Stanford University in 1986. And it is no surprise—his program proposal was precisely what food service managers and employees needed to fill the communication gap separating them. The Stanford Latino Literacy Program focuses on the development of effective workplace communications skills between Spanish-speaking employees and English-speaking food service managers. A collaboration between the food service company at Stanford and El Centro Chicano (a cultural activities center at Stanford), the program helps foster better workplace relations between the managers and employees through language instruction. Managers receive Spanish language training and employees receive English language training.

The program fosters better workplace relations between food service workers and managers.

Participants in this program are drawn from three segments of the Stanford University community. Food service managers and the food service workers are the learners in the program. Stanford students serve as the tutors. The student tutors are recruited through various networks on campus (i.e. flyers and other means of publicity) and must undergo training before they begin work with either Spanish or English instruction.

Since the tutoring is geared toward improving "workplace communication skills," tutors must familiarize themselves with the responsibilities of employees and managers as well as the rules and regulations by which the food service managers and employees work. From this information, and from basic on-the-job observation, tutors compile a list of work specific language which is then used as instructional material. Language text books are also used, complementing the work-oriented materials. In addition to Spanish language training, managers participate in special workshops designed to familiarize them with cultural issues that may help with effective communication.

In its first year, the program involved a total of 28 participants: 8 managers, 10 employees and 10 tutors. Although the program size is small, Castaneda points out that it is "slowly developing. We want to make sure that it is tight."

Tutors and learners meet twice a week at El Centro Chicano for one hour sessions. "An institutionalized unit of the university," the center operates under the student affairs office and provides academic support, cultural programs for both students and community members, and an environment for cultural activity. As a result, it is a crossroads for students and community members and serves as an ideal language learning environment. Castaneda notes that, "It gets the workers out of the working environment and enables them to put themselves into a different state of mind." He adds that since both workers and employees are language students, there seems to be a sort of equality that allows them to interact with one another on terms other than their working relationship.

The program is funded by approximately seven different organizations including the United Stanford Worker's Union, Marriott (the food service company), the student body, and Stanford's Public Service Center. Castaneda receives funding from Stanford for his coordination and has managed to get some money to pay a student to do administrative work. As previously mentioned, El Centro Chicano provides some of the materials used in the program and is the tutorial site.

Although the program has been successful, there have been obstacles to overcome. Castaneda reports that the biggest problem planners and participants encountered was one of scheduling. Because the students and workers both have strict schedules to follow, coordinating meeting times was difficult. Through careful planning times were arranged and sessions were held. There was also some difficulty with the tutor-training process: materials necessary to train tutors are somewhat hard to come by. At present, Castaneda is working to develop training materials to meet the Latino Literacy Project's special needs. A student is working on materials to enhance the learners' curriculum as well.

The initial results of the Stanford Latino Literacy Project have been exciting. The attitudes of the Spanish-speaking workers have improved immensely, both toward their work and, more important, toward themselves. According to Castaneda, this new attitude gives the employees the initiative to seek out opportunities for themselves.

The attitudes of the workers have improved immensely both toward their work and toward themselves.

"The University is making an effort to provide them with some type of benefit other than their paycheck."

"For the first time, they [the employees] feel like the University is making an effort to provide them with some type of benefit other than their paycheck." Managers and employees have narrowed the gap that previously hindered effective communication between them. As a result, workplace attitudes have improved and productivity levels have increased. More important, an understanding between the two groups has been created. As one manager says, "I finally realized the true personality of one of my employees. Before the project, this employee was dormant."

For more information, contact:

Pedro Castaneda, Project Coordinator
El Centro Chicano
The Nitery
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305

University of Pennsylvania

The university is a model of how an institution can get involved in urban issues.

The University of Pennsylvania is a model of how faculty, administrators, and students can work together to involve a campus in urban issues. "Literacy is an example where the resources of the university can be very helpful to community problems," says Barbara Stevens, executive assistant to Penn's president. The university is involved in literacy through the academic and research interests of the faculty as well as through direct service in tutoring.

Part of the university's commitment comes from the support and actions of its president, Sheldon Hackney. Hackney is firmly committed to improving and increasing the connections between the university and the city. Several of his initiatives have concerned community education. Hackney was a founder of the Committee to Support Philadelphia Public Schools, and is chairman of the West Philadelphia Partnership, which supports economic development and education in the areas around Penn.

Hackney is also committed to involving undergraduates in community issues. He is one of the professors for "Urban Universities and Their Communities," an honors seminar in which undergraduate students study issues of higher education and cities. Students enrolled in the course must participate in a research project on city government, development, or education, supervised by the agency director and a Penn professor. Projects have included work in local literacy and education programs. One project, for example, led to the creation of the West Philadelphia Youth Improvement Corps, which started in 1984 as a summer project for 60 teenagers and has grown to a year-round project funded by a $70,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

A number of distinct tutoring projects at Penn offer the chance for students, faculty, and staff to work one-to-one with learners. The campus Adult Literacy Committee recruits faculty and staff members along with students to tutor basic reading and English as a Second Language (ESL) at a local literacy agency. The university's Hillel organization sponsors Project Chai, an adult tutoring project run through the city-wide Mayor's Commission on Literacy. Other Penn students volunteer through Penn Extension, the campus volunteer office. In addition, the School of Education offers a course on "Fieldwork in Adult Literacy," which combines weekly seminars on theories of literacy with fieldwork in the community.

The Graduate School of Education, which offers a masters program in adult literacy, houses the Literacy Research Center. The Literacy Research Center was established in 1983 to assist academic institutions, businesses, and governments in promoting literacy in the United States and abroad. The Center is an example of how faculty members interested in literacy issues can apply their work to serve the community. It developed from research interests of faculty members, who got together and approached the provost and head of the Graduate School with a proposal for an organized way to pursue their common interests. The Center has two major objectives: to develop policy on literacy-related problems through basic and applied research; and to increase communication between literacy researchers and practitioners.

Faculty members involved in literacy research can apply their work to serve the community.

Faculty affiliated with the Center include representatives of departments as diverse as psychology, sociology, romance languages, linguistics, anthropology, city planning, education, Oriental Studies, and the Wharton School of Finance. Some of the research projects undertaken include work on adult literacy training programs, literacy in multilingual settings, the relationship between reading and writing development in children, computer literacy, and cross-cultural studies of literacy development in the Third World.

The Center also participates in programs to serve the local community. These include: 1) the Literacy Network Seminar Program, providing support to school administrators and teachers; 2) a lunchtime speaker series open to literacy specialists, practitioners, and students; and 3) the reading/writing/study services of the school of education, providing instruction to learners of all ages.

In the 1986-87 academic year, the university was the host and helped organize two major local conferences on adult literacy. The first, a University-Community Forum on Literacy, drew over 250 representatives of business, higher education, and community literacy services. This "town meeting" enabled literacy providers to meet with leaders from businesses and universities to discuss community needs and ways to create partnerships for literacy. The second meeting, a working conference on adult literacy, was co-sponsored by the Center for

Literacy, a local literacy service provider with close ties to the university. Participants included adult literacy workers in community organizations, school, unions and churches, and literacy researchers in schools, centers, and universities.

The University of Pennsylvania's programs have been helped by a wide range of contacts in the community at all levels of involvement, from members of Philadelphia's Mayor's Commission on Literacy to leaders of community agencies and neighborhood schools.

For more information, contact:

Dan Wagner, Director
Literacy Research Center
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Barbara Stevens
Executive Assistant to the President
100 College Hall
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104

VISTA Volunteer—Michal Mackillop

Prepared by Catherine M. Lindeman
Carleton College, Class of 1989

When Michael MacKillop was in the sixth grade he and his friends decided that one day they were going to join the VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) volunteer corps. Years later, as a student at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, MacKillop remembered his childhood plans and decided that after graduating in 1986, he would become a VISTA volunteer. Founded in 1965, the VISTA program is now administered through ACTION, the federal domestic volunteer agency. Volunteers are recruited to work with non-profit organizations which grapple with poverty and poverty-related issues. While VISTA pays its volunteers a monthly stipend to cover living expenses, the volunteers work day-to-day for individual community non-profit organizations.

"It's a real education, learning how people learn."

Because MacKillop's primary interest was education (he taught English in China for one year), he applied to work with Oregon Literacy, Inc. There, he develops literacy programs and strengthens established community projects. He also volunteers his time as a tutor, working individually with a learner on a regular basis. "It's a real education, learning how people learn," MacKillop remarks.

"I think students [learners] should be involved.....in the issue."

MacKillop's job involves the many aspects of and approaches to literacy. "It's a lot of responsibility," he asserts. For example, he recruits both learners and volunteers for Oregon Literacy, organizes various meetings for the community, and promotes awareness of the opportunities and projects offered by the program. At present, he is trying to establish a support system for tutors and learners: "I would like to set up a forum for students [learners] to talk about their experiences as non-readers and about their involvement in a literacy program. I think students [learners] should be involved in the ...... issue."

MacKillop not only works with local community members, he also plans to collaborate with local college communities as well. Because most students are at school eight months out of the year, it is difficult to match them with an adult learner who requires continuous instruction. However, in conjunction with Portland State University, MacKillop is exploring ways other than tutoring to use the resources college students have to offer. Although still in the planning stages, MacKillop's ideas include training education majors to train others as literacy tutors and establishing a "drop-in-learning center" where adult non-readers can go for reading instruction. MacKillop reasons that the center will provide adult non-readers with regular assistance and, at the same time, allow student tutors the flexibility they need in scheduling.

MacKillop also plans to combine the resources of Oregon Literacy with those available at the area community colleges. "The services we [community colleges/Oregon Literacy] offer often overlap one another so we want to coordinate tutor and learner opportunities," says MacKillop. This, he hopes, will result in more effective programs for both projects.

"It's a very different environment from college—I'm no longer isolated in my own world."

MacKillop's work as a VISTA volunteer gives him experience in a wide variety of areas. His job calls for organizational skills and also demands creativity and initiative. As he says, "I have sort of a free rein here." When speaking about the experience in general, MacKillop responds positively: "It's been very good. Just an eye-opening experience of how an organization works. It's a very different environment from college—I'm no longer isolated in my own world. I'm exposed to many different people and it's giving me a greater awareness of worldly problems." What is he planning to do when his year as a volunteer is over? "I'm not quite sure, but this experience has opened up many possibilities. I may go back to school."

For more information, contact:

Michael MacKillop
Oregon Literacy, Inc.
9806 Southwest Boones Ferry Road
Portland, OR 97219

Yale University

The emphasis on learning meshed well with Yale's role as an educational institution.

The Yale-Adult Literacy Volunteer Project pairs Yale employees who have been trained as tutors with adult learners from the New Haven community.

The first step for the employee-based volunteer project began when the coordinators of Yale Volunteer Services sent out a survey asking all 7,000 Yale employees about their involvement in the community. With contact names collected from the survey responses, the coordinator established an advisory committee of staff and faculty. The committee decided to develop a university-supported volunteer project.

A program focusing on the issue of literacy was appropriate for a number of reasons. About 20% of New Haven residents—or 25,000 people—are functionally illiterate. The local volunteer organization, Literacy Volunteers of New Haven, faced a critical shortage of tutors, averaging only 30 volunteers when hundreds were needed. In addition, the emphasis on learning meshed well with Yale's role as an educational institution, and all Yale employees could participate.

The current project is a collaboration among three groups: Literacy Volunteers of New Haven, the New Haven Adult Basic Education (ABE) program (run by the Connecticut Department of Education with Federal funding), and Yale Volunteer Services. The three groups met to discuss cooperative programs and came up with a division of skills and resources to meet the needs of the proposed employee volunteer program.

Literacy Volunteers of New Haven recruits adult learners and provides training and technical support. ABE pays a reading teacher who acts as an instructor and field coordinator. Yale furnishes physical resources (including classrooms, training space, and parking), recruits employees as tutors, purchases training materials, recognizes volunteers, and pays the volunteer services coordinator who supervises the project.

Volunteer tutors receive 10 hours of training and may tutor either English as a Second Language (ESL) or Basic Reading (BR) learners.

"One truly unique aspect of this program is that it includes volunteers from all over the campus."

There are also opportunities for volunteers to work as classroom aides in an ESL class held on campus. Tutors meet with learners for one hour, twice a week. A Yale building where tutors and students can meet is made available two evenings a week.

Volunteers have come from all segments of the Yale University community. Current and retired faculty members, along with administrators, graduate students, nurses, librarians, and other staff members have volunteered as tutors. Both staff and faculty members serve on an advisory committee, which was instrumental in the development of the project.

"One truly unique aspect of this program is that it includes volunteers from all over the campus. People from the Art Department are donating their services to design a recruiting poster, others are offering their homes for meetings and still others are giving of their time and money," says Pamela Anderson, the program's coordinator.

In addition, the original group of 27 tutors, recruited in the first year of operations, has taken on a leadership role. For example, experienced Yale volunteers call new tutors each month to check on progress and problems and meet and interview prospective volunteers.

Yale's interest in literacy, along with the nationwide efforts of Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS), has spurred other literacy activity in the city. More than 200 tutors from all over the city now work with Literacy Volunteers of New Haven. The Mayor's Office in New Haven has formed a Task Force for Literacy. The director of Yale Volunteer Services and a Yale professor of bilingual education both serve on the new city-wide commission.

For more information contact:

Pamela B. Anderson
Coordinator
Yale Volunteer Services
Box 404A
Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520

ISSUES 11

Introduction

There are a variety of opinions and theories about what makes a person literate in today's society. As discussed in *Chapter 2: What is Literacy?*, debates about the number of illiterate Americans and the extent of the literacy problem in this country engage literacy service providers, scholars, and politicians. The purpose of *Chapter 11: Issues* is to give readers a sense of the variety of ideas that concern people who work with and study the issue of literacy. Five articles that represent a range of opinions about literacy and illiteracy have been reprinted in this chapter.

The purpose is to give readers a sense of the variety of ideas that concern people who work with and study the issue of literacy.

The authors of the articles come from around the country and have different perspectives on the issue of literacy. They are listed in the order in which their articles appear in this chapter.

Jonathan Kozol is a literacy activist who has worked as a school teacher in Boston and written a number of books on literacy. "Fifteen Myths About Illiterate America" examines and responds to common misconceptions about illiteracy in the United States.

Ralph Arrindell, an adult new reader, is on the staff of a community literacy program. Arrindell's article, "L.V.A. Conference," discusses the involvement of adult learners at a national literacy conference and addresses how new readers can participate in the management of literacy programs.

David Harman, a professor at Columbia University, has studied literacy for over 20 years. "Keeping Up in America" offers an historical perspective on literacy in the United States from the 17th century to the present.

Michael Holtzman works as a professor at Lehman College. He has helped set up literacy programs in conjunction with the California Conservation Corps. "Teaching Is Remembering" focuses on the role of a faculty member in setting up a literacy program. The article also disucusses some of the human costs of illiteracy.

Pat Rigg is a consultant with American Language and Literacy in Spokane, Washington and *Francis E. Kazemek* is a professor in the Department of Education at Eastern Washington University at Cheney. The Kazemek and Rigg collaboration, "Four Poets: Modern Poetry in the Adult Literacy Classroom," gives concrete advice on how to use poetry as learning material.

It is the hope that these articles will emphasize the complexity of the issue and will increase the readers' understanding of literacy.

"Fifteen Myths About Illiterate America"

by Jonathan Kozol

A number of unexamined statements—some of them with misleading implications—have become imbedded in the media's discussion of this issue. We present here those that we regard as most injurious. We don't expect the press to fall in line with our opinions. We do believe that journalists will want to take a hard look at these questions and arrive at some conclusions of their own.

1. "Illiterate people suffer from an affliction. Their status constitutes an epidemic."

This language constitutes an insult to nonreaders.

An epidemic is an Act of God. Illiteracy is an Act of Man. Illiterates are not "afflicted." They are the products of an education system that provides the children of the affluent with many times the yearly fiscal allocation granted to the children of the poor.

"Last year," wrote the New York *Times* this winter, "the richest New Jersey districts spent about $1,100 more for each pupil than did the poorest districts..." The spending gap four years ago was $500 less. The disparity, the *Times* reported, "is higher now than it was twelve years ago."

The Boston *Globe* reported that per-pupil allocations in some Massachusetts schools are four times the sum invested in each child in less affluent systems.

Low-income Lawrence, Massachusetts can afford only $2,200 yearly for each child's education. Lawrence turns out hundreds of illiterates each year. In Weston, Connecticut nearly $7000 is invested yearly in each pupil. There are few illiterates in Weston.

Our task is not to heal affliction. It is to redress injustice.

2. "Illiterates are reluctant to come forward. Their hesitation is the greatest obstacle we face."

Illiterates do face high risks of humiliation. The fact that millions overcome their fears and ask for help, only to be turned away for lack of funds, is testimony to their courage and our parsimony.

Jonathan Kozol is the author of several books including *Death at an Early Age*, *The Night is Dark*, *Free Schools*, and *Illiterate America*. He has received awards from the Guggenheim, Ford, and Rockefeller Foundations and has taught at Yale University and South Boston High School.

from Where Stands the Republic? Illiteracy: A Warning and a Challenge to the Nation's Press. A report, with recommendations to the American Newspaper Publishers Association and the American Society of Newspaper Editors, written at the invitation of Cox Newspapers. Published by Cox Newspapers, October, 1986. Reprinted by permission of Cox Enterprises, Inc.

In Illinois alone, according to the Business Council for Effective Literacy, 117,000 adults were enrolled in Adult Basic Education classes during 1983. An additional 112,000 adults who had asked for help were turned away.

Literacy Action in Atlanta with an enviable 80 percent graduation rate, lost 85 percent of its fiscal support in 1982 as a result of Federal cuts. The New York *Times* reports that it was forced to turn away "hundreds of applicants."

Blaming the victim is particularly unkind when the victims have been waiting at the door but lack the verbal skills to contradict those who accuse them of a lack of motivation.

3. "Illiterates are mostly immigrants and nonwhite people."

While percentages are highest for our poorest people, and therefore for black and Hispanic adults, the largest *numbers* of illiterate Americans are white and native-born. Book publisher Harold McGraw states that perhaps 25 percent are immigrants.

We would face a serious literacy crisis in this nation even if we had no recent immigrants—nor even those forced immigrants who came here in slave ships of an earlier age.

4. "Illiterates are people who, by oversight, somehow fell through the cracks."

Such phrasing substitutes the whim of error for unequal allocations of resources. Illiterates did not fall through the cracks. Most of them never had a floor to stand on in the first place.

5. "With the use of phonics there would be no literacy crisis."

Those who blame our reading failures on the fact that rigid phonics were replaced since World War II by more eclectic methods may forget the fact that the same methods they deplore were used in affluent and impoverished neighborhoods alike. Most of those who read these words were taught to read by methods which were not exclusively phonetic. The relative excellence of teachers, smaller class-size, and the presence of supportive extra services in affluent school districts, reinforced by early reading in the homes of literate adults, help us to understand why the same methods used throughout America should have produced large numbers of illiterates among the poor and millions of good critical readers among population groups whose parents were more fortunate.

Phonics has respected advocates. Fanatical excess discredits a good cause.

6. "America has the world's best education system. It is the students, not the system, that are at fault."

It would be more accurate to say that U.S. education at its very best is unexcelled but, at its worst, is certainly inferior to that afforded to most citizens in comparably wealthy and developed social orders.

While international comparisons must be advanced with caution, it is agreed by most observers that the overall success of U.S. education lags behind that of a number of our economic rivals. Depending on which indices and sources we accept, the U.S. ranks between fifteenth and fiftieth worldwide in literacy levels. ABC News pegs us at about fifteenth (eighteenth for men, thirteenth for women). The Washington *Post* in November, 1982, citing Rudolf Flesch (author of *"Why Johnny Can't Read"*), and the New York *Times*, also in 1982, citing Mrs. Barbara Bush, pegged us at forty-ninth—a number which is much disputed. ABC, identifying its source as the U.N., tells us that the top five nations in the world are Australia, Finland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and the Soviet Union. It is difficult to know if these comparisons are soundly based. It is also less important, in our belief, to ask how well America stacks up against the foreign competition than to ask how well we measure up against our own potential.

Our nation is unique in wealth and governance: We are our own worst enemy or else our own best rival. If we compete, it should be against what we could be—not what other nations claim to be but frequently are not.

7. "There has been a drive for excellence for several years. Tougher tests and higher standards have begun to raise the reading levels of the students now emerging from the public schools."

A nation is imperilled by the willingness to take an avalanche of rhetoric for the real thing. Figures released by the College Board a year ago indicated that SATs had risen about eight tenths of one percent. A study by the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), issued at the same time, indicated slight improvements in the reading levels of some of our seventeen-year-olds. What many press reports did not observe was that less than two million students even dared to take the SATs or other college entrance tests. Meanwhile, one million more had disappeared from schooling altogether every year since 1980.

A more disturbing fact uncovered by this study was the stunning gap between those who were children of well-educated parents and those who were children of the adults we describe within this book. Test results for seventeen-year-olds whose parents had less than a high school education were the same as those of thirteen year old kids whose parents had attended college.

These outcomes were predictable. Tougher tests at the end of the road without enhanced and solid educative progress in the previous twelve years can function only as a post-hoc punitive attack on those whom we have shortchanged since their childhood. The stiffening of graduation standards, at the same time that the funds have diminished, threatens to intensify the drop-out crisis by demanding more of those to whom we now give less.

Affluent children may have done a trifle better—but a larger number of the poor have been excluded from the competition altogether.

Tests do not teach reading. Only well-paid teachers do.

8. "If illiteracy rates are high it is the fault of parents who do not read to their kids."

Such statements fail to recognize the anguish undergone by parents who cannot respond to exhortations they can't read. Illiterate parents deserve no blame for inability to act upon the dictates of their conscience and good sense.

Scapegoating an illiterate parent is mean-spirited and useless. Literacy action targeted at youthful parents would be more productive and in better taste.

9. "Television is to blame."

Most people who read these words grew up with television, as this author did. We nonetheless learned to read and write; and most of us still manage to enjoy good books and we depend on newspapers. Television diverts good readers sometimes from the full enjoyment of their skills; there is no evidence that it is a major factor in obstructing acquisition of such skills.

Illiterate adults, unable to acquire information from the printed word, unquestionably watch more television than skillful readers do. People are not illiterate *because* they watch TV. They may watch TV because they are illiterate.

The vigorous commitment recently displayed by a commercial network (ABC) and its nonprofit partner (PBS) in launching an unprecedented literacy effort on TV justifies our faith that television may be viewed not as a rival but as a potentially invaluable ally. There is no commercial pay-off for a television network in attempting to enhance the reading competence of those who otherwise might be its captive clientele. If ever there was an act of civic virtue, this is it.

Rather than condemn TV, we ought to explore the ways to use it to bring people back to print.

10. "Computerized communications and some other aspects of technology have rendered literacy obsolete."

Computers rely on written words. People instruct computers. Other people are obliged to read them. The heightened capacity for information transfer that computers now make possible, increasing the profusion of the print materials that now surround us, calls not only for more solid reading skills but for higher aptitude in skimming, sorting, filtering, and analyzing capabilities. Drowning in data poured forth by computerized production, workers must discriminate continuously between the elemental and tangential. Consumers too are flooded with computerized solicitations, bills, and legally required notices. Those who can't read well and swiftly will be powerless to isolate the urgent item ("termination of phone service" or "bank overdraft") from the surrounding trivia.

Heightened technology intensifies the need for people with the competence to be its master.

11. "The problem is not that people cannot read but that they do not want to."

Illiterates do not elect to forfeit what they know already they cannot possess.

12. "Illiteracy is not the cause of poverty, injustice, unemployment. It is naive to try to solve this problem without trying first to alter the conditions that impoverish millions of our people."

The argument, heard paradoxically from both the Right and Left, is that we face a syndrome of dilemmas so immense that any intervention on the literacy front is doomed to be a futile enterprise. Literacy will not solve all our problems. It won't end hunger. It will not assure that every person has a home and proper medical attention. The point that counts is that, among a multitude of "causes," illiteracy is one of the very few that we have weapons to address. Many problems that contribute to the misery of human beings appear for now to be intractable. Most are politically volatile to a degree that guarantees contentious opposition. Illiteracy is one of the few aspects of injustice on which natural instincts of compassion and the toughest mandates of industrial and national self-interest coincide. It is, for these reasons, one of those rare items of American fair play around which a bipartisan consensus can be plausibly erected.

A wise society will not allow itself to lose this chance.

13. "The problem can be met at local levels. States and cities have the means to face this on their own."

This writing is intended to encourage local action. But local efforts cannot be successful if initiated out of context. The context of the city is the state: and, of the state, the nation.

New York City allocates $8.75 million yearly to address the needs of over a million functionally illiterate adults. This allocation, about nine dollars per nonreader, is by far the largest sum expended by a single city.

California, where a state senate study has identified 4.8 to 6 million functional illiterates, allocates $60 million in state funds to ABE—far more than any other state. Yet California ABE is forced to turn away one thousand people every week. In Los Angeles alone, there are 10,000 adults on the waiting list.

If California cannot meet the need with local funding, no state can. If New York City cannot meet the need with local revenues, no city can.

Local groups can do a lot. But those who tell us that the local folks can do it on their own are just not being realistic.

14. "If the money simply isn't there, let the burden of the task be left to volunteers."

This is a dangerous and misleading statement.

(1) Volunteers have made a priceless contribution to this struggle. But it is a grave mistake to think that volunteers are free. It costs money to find them, train them, supervise them, provide them with a place to work and with the materials required to provide instruction. Absence of paid staff denies us the opportunity to tap into the mainstream of American compassion. Loss of organizers paid by VISTA, for example, is translated into forfeiture of thousands of potential unpaid volunteers. The choice is not between the federal dollar and the local volunteer. Without the federal dollar we are losing the required leverage to make use of volunteers.

(2) The traditional source of volunteers for many years—middle class women without careers—has diminished greatly as job opportunities for women have expanded. Even with the help of thousands of retired persons, there is no way that volunteers can meet so great a need. The two largest volunteer groups in the nation serve less than 100,000 people. The largest organization using volunteers in the entire state of Arkansas serves 300 people.

(3) The most effective use of volunteers is in collaboration with well-paid professionals. An excellent example of a group that brings together paid and unpaid workers, Literacy Action in Atlanta, needs about $400 for each student served. According to its chairman, Literacy Action serves less than one third the number of those *new* illiterates emerging from Atlanta's public schools each year.

We are often asked this question: "Can you solve a problem of this sort by throwing money at it?" This may be the one case where you can.

15. "We need more information. Research is needed to find out what works."

We know what works.

Researchers have made their case and have provided us with countless models of success.

The research needed next is that which monitors our progress as we move into a new phase of expanded effort.

What we do not need are further studies that reiterate the work that has been done already.

What we do need are the energy and the dollars to take action on the things we know.

L.V.A. CONFERENCE

by Ralph Arrindell

It all started when the question was asked "How can we get students to go to Chicago for the Conference?" It would be nice to have students attend the Conference but the L.V.A. had no money to send students there. It is held by the Literacy Volunteers of America in different places every year.

It all started when the question was asked "How can we get students to go to Chicago for the Conference?"

We had a few students who went to the Conference last year, in 1985, and would like more students to attend this year, 1986. After meeting, Grace Holmes, Director of Tutor Training, and myself went out for lunch to talk about what we could do to help students go to the Conference. I started telling her I would like to go even if I have to pay my own way but what about other students? Grace suggested different things we could do to raise money. So I said, "What about a raffle?" She said, "Good." We were thinking about the time we had because Grace was going on vacation and I was leaving a week later. So we had to find someone to help with the raffle while we were on vacation.

At the next staff meeting, one of the things we talked about was the raffle. I looked around the table and said to myself, "Who can I ask to help?" Caryn Davis, who is the Brooklyn Site Coordinator, was a new person on the staff and seemed to be very nice and active. I asked her would she like to help? She said, "Sure, I would be glad to help" so, after the meeting, we talked about all the different things we needed to make the raffle work. For example, what kind of prizes we can get and where the raffle would be drawn.

We were thinking of drawing the raffle at the picnic in Central Park, which was governed by the Tutor Representative Committee, but time was too short so we decided to draw it in Brooklyn because Caryn was in charge. She had to make many phone calls to get people to donate prizes so we would not use the money we made to buy prizes.

After the raffle was drawn, the money we made and some money we got from L.V.A. was enough to send fifteen students to the Conference. We wanted the students from each site to attend so they could tell other students about the Conference. That didn't work out because students from some sites couldn't get time off work. Site co-ordinators were talking to students to encourage them to attend.

Before the Conference, we decided to meet with students and staff who were going to Chicago. We had a party at Eli Zal's apartment. He is our Executive Director. We talked about what our goals were and got to know more about each other. The second time we met at the J.C. Penney site with Marilyn Boutwell, our Associate Director, and myself. We talked about what we would do in case of emergency, how we could get to the airport and more information about the Conference. Marilyn

Literacy Volunteers of New York City, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Ralph Arrindell is a staff member at Literacy Volunteers of New York City, Inc. An adult new reader, Mr. Arrindell works with other staff and learners to orient and train them.

turned everything over to me. Ellen Steiner, who is the J.C. Penney Intensive Site Co-ordinator, had taken care of the students' plane tickets, on People Express, before she went on vacation. She led one group and I led the other.

The Conference was three days so we stayed in Chicago for three days and nights. We left New York from Newark on Thursday, October 16th, 1986 at 7:45 a.m. There were seven of us. We met at the airport. I was the last one getting there. They all looked at me and said, "Ralph, you are late. Boy are we glad to see you." I said to myself, "Mmmh, good." Everyone was there because we had to arrive at the airport one hour before the flight left so we could check in.

I felt responsible because I had all the plane tickets and some money for the students and all the papers with directions on how to get from the airport to the hotel and more. For me, this was something I never did before. I had to make sure the students were placed in the right seats. The students who smoked were in the smoking area. The ones who don't smoke sat in the non-smoking area. We had two students who had never flown before. I had to make sure they had someone to sit with them. As for me, I sat in the non-smoking area with Edwin.

Edwin and myself talked about the safety magazine and what we could do in case of emergency, after they gave us instructions. Being in charge, I walked around to make sure everybody was O.K. Grace was on the same flight so I knew if I had any problems I could ask for help, but everything was fine. The students were very comfortable so when I was going around I stopped and said "Hi" to Grace. She said, "Ralph, you are doing great, I like the way you are leading your group." I felt good about if because all my life I felt I couldn't do anything and when you can't read it's worse.

We flew for two hours. We arrived in Chicago at 9:45 a.m. Some people from L.V.A. were waiting for us with a sign up saying "L.V.A." We thought that was good because Chicago airport is one of the busiest in the world. It was very busy when we got there so the people who greeted us at the airport from L.V.A. were nice.

They showed us where to take the bus to the hotel. It was twenty minutes through the city to the hotel. It was very nice and exciting viewing Chicago. When we got to the hotel, we saw the rest of the students walking towards the hotel. They took the subway to get there. So we all walked in at the same time. I went over to the desk and checked in, we went to get information about the Conference.

The Conference took place in the Americana Hotel which is on Michigan Avenue in the city of Chicago. The hotel takes up one whole block and was very tall. The rooms were large. The workshops took place on three floors in different rooms. They also had a room where the students met to talk about all the different things that were going on at the Conference.

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The first day in the students' room, we met students from different states and talked about workshops and what we would like to do. Some students talked about making a speech, others talked about doing a play and some talked about what kind of workshop they would attend. As for me, I was thinking about taking part in the play and making a speech and what kind of workshop I will attend. The students' room the first day was like an orientation. We heard about the Conference and what was going on: workshops, student forum, the opening ceremonies and the banquet. They were all at different times.

After I came out of the students' room, I went to my first workshop. It was about taking the G.E.D. test and the different subjects. It was the first time I heard how to take a test. It was very interesting for me. When a student is taking a test and has very little time, you must read as fast as you can. Don't stay too long on one question and come back to one later. When the person who is giving the test comes and says you have five minutes more, you must guess all the answers. It's better to give your paper in answering all the questions. You may get some right. If you don't answer all the questions, you don't have a chance. There were many more things I learned. I can give my own workshop in G.E.D. It was great.

After the workshop, I went back to the students' room where we all met again. Gabriel, who was coordinating the students' room was asking students to speak at the opening ceremonies. I said to myself "Good, I will get a chance to speak" but I didn't know what I will speak about. I stayed and listened to what other students had to say. Some wanted to talk about their experience in the program but it was suggested that it's better to speak about something else instead of telling about how you learned to read and write. Students thought they were being told what to say and what not to say. Most of the students who signed up to speak were from our program. We had fifteen students who went to the Conference. It was hard. Students wanted to talk about what they learned in the program so they were angry and upset. Some of them were beginners and didn't have the confidence or experience to talk about anything else.

When I left the students' room, I went out for lunch with Eli and Caryn. It made me feel good because things were on my mind. I was thinking "Why can't students speak about what they want?" I said to myself "I will speak about being heard and reaching out, stop being invisible." We want to be heard and not be invisible.

We want to be heard and not be invisible.

I remember walking down by the beach with Eli Zal and another staff member, Caryn Davis. We talked about Chicago, the windy city. It was a bit windy then. The walk was good and being away from home gave me a chance to think about other things instead of thinking about everyday life. For example, how my life had changed since I got into the program. I never liked to travel but now I love to go to different places, like going to Chicago for the Conference. It was the best I felt in a long time. The walk was short. We had to go back to the hotel in time for the opening ceremony.

When we got there, it had already begun and I saw two students who were sitting up on stage with the speakers. I said to myself "I don't think I will speak so I decided to make a tape and make some pictures. Most students felt left out because they weren't included in the ceremony. They wanted to participate in it. The ceremony was great anyway.

What excited me the most was the Laotian refugees who were doing a dance because my ex-tutor, Nick, went to China. He told me about the illiteracy and a few more things about China so it made me pay a lot of attention to anything oriental.

I didn't get a chance to speak but that was O.K. because they had two students from our program. I felt good because I knew they were good speakers, even though they didn't speak too long.

The next day, at the students' room, we talked more about the student forum and what we were going to do. Some students decided not to speak. I remember talking to Marilyn and Caryn about the way the students felt because it was important to me. We had two students from the Committee we formed throughout the program. Greg Lees was the Gulf and Western Site Co-ordinator and was doing advocacy.

The student forum was a place where students could express themselves. I spoke about being heard and not being invisible. I also talked about the way L.V.A. advertises on T.V. The phone number disappears so fast that it takes a person who wants to join three times before he gets the number. Also, people who speak about illiteracy never show their faces. One person said people don't have to show their faces if they don't want to but if people don't appear, it doesn't seem real - like it's a real problem. They are not visible.

People who can read don't know what it's like not being able to read. I can explain what it feels like.

I had a chance to express myself about what it's like to be a student on staff. I have found it very helpful because of the type of information I can give to staff. People who can read don't know what it's like not being able to read. I can explain what it feels like.

I sat and listened to the other students speak. At the same time I was looking at the audience. They were serious and listening carefully. Students felt good because they had a chance to speak and express themselves. After the students spoke, they got a lot of applause from the audience and were greeted with hugs and kisses. Some people were crying, some were taking pictures of groups of students and people from the audience were smiling. It was great. Students felt good because they had a chance to participate in the conference and would have liked to do more.

The students spoke very strongly because they felt very good about themselves and were able to speak about things that were on their mind.

The students spoke very strongly because they felt very good about themselves and were able to speak about things that were on their mind. After the student forum, some people were asking questions. For example, what would be the best time to advertise on T.V. It was suggested that most people watch the news.

Then we went to the banquet. It was beautiful. The food was good and there were some speeches which were interesting.

We also did a Writing Workshop with Marilyn. The participants were amazed to see students were teaching and explaining what writing does for them because reading and writing go together. We used the Big Apple Journal and a piece of writing I did called "Part of Life" and more. The workshop was enlightening. Marilyn had to leave to catch her flight on time. Students ended the workshop answering questions about writing.

The night before I left Chicago, I was walking around the hotel and saw a church on the premises. I decided to attend because I felt lonely as half of the students had left early that evening. It was the first time I saw a church in a hotel.

After a mix-up with the tickets, we got home safely. It was good to be back. Everyone met and talked about what a good time they had and how much they are looking forward to next year.

Keeping Up In America

by David Harman

"Learn them to read the Scriptures, and be conversant therein," the Reverend John Cotton urged his Boston parishioners in a 1656 homily on child rearing. "Reading brings much benefit to little Children."

"Benefit" was an understatement. In the harsh moral universe of Cotton's New England Puritans, ignorance was no excuse for sin: A child who died young (as many did) could expect no mercy in the hereafter merely because he had not been able to read the Bible. Massachusetts' colonial authorities had already acted on the fear that parents were not doing enough to protect their children from the "old deluder Satan." In 1647, nine years before Cotton's sermon, they required every township of 50 families or more to provide a teacher for the young.

Satan may be, in this sense, behind us, but the challenge of making Americans literate is not. Almost any adult born in America today can read enough to satisfy John Cotton; but the preacher set a simple standard. His flock did not need to ponder the meaning of a ballot referendum, or the requirements of a Help Wanted advertisement, or the operating instructions for a word processor—all frequently written by people who may only be semi-literate themselves.

"The ability to understand an unfamiliar text, rather than simply declaim a familiar one," as researchers Daniel P. and Lauren B. Resnick put it, is today's new standard of literacy. That kind of *functional* literacy may seem almost quaint in an age of telephones and TV news, and of computers (with languages of their own) and color-coded cash register keys that make counting or reading almost unnecessary for teenage clerks at fast-food restaurants. Time after time in the past literacy has seemed, for a brief historical moment, redundant, a luxury, not needed by ordinary folk.

Yet those Americans who could not read and write, then as now, became the servants for those who could.

Yet those Americans who could not read and write, then as now, became the servants for those who could; they were sometimes deprived of prosperity and liberty, always of autonomy and knowledge. What will become of today's students who fail to become fluent in the English tongue? Even those who achieve *technological* literacy, staking their futures on a narrow mastery of FORTRAN or UNIX or some other computer language, will be at a disadvantage. Eventually, predicts Robert Pattison of Long Island University, they will wind up working for "English majors from Berkeley and Harvard."

It has been said that we live in an Information Age. The information that is important is not bits and bytes, but ideas and knowledge conveyed in clear English. All this requires a more sophisticated level of literacy. The worker of the future, warns

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David Harman is a professor of education at Teachers College of Columbia University. He is the author of several books including *Adult Illiteracy in the United States* (with Carmen St. John Hunter, 1979) and *Illiteracy: A National Dilemma* (1986). Professor Harman also serves as president of the Institute for Corporate Education.

the National Academy of Sciences, must be "able and willing to learn throughout a lifetime." By that new standard, America probably has nearly half the proportion of illiterates among its population in 1986 than it did in Cotton's time.

As Americans have been painfully reminded in recent years, schooling and literacy are not always synonymous.

Traditional literacy spread rapidly in 17th- and 18th-century America, mostly through church-run schools and through informal education—parents teaching their children, masters teaching their apprentices. But it is unclear just how literate colonial America was. As Americans have been painfully reminded in recent years, schooling and literacy are not always synonymous. And in the days before the Revolution, America's schoolchildren probably spent, at most, three years in the classroom.

By counting the number of men who could sign their name to deeds and other public documents as literate (literacy for women was deemed irrelevant in most of the colonies; for slaves, dangerous), historians have reckoned that literacy in America rose from about 60 percent among the first white male colonists to about 75 percent by 1800. That figure masks a great deal of diversity. City-dwellers were more literate than country folk, Northerners more likely to read and write than Southerners and Westerners, the well-to-do better schooled than the poor. Ninety percent of New Englanders could sign their own names by the time the U.S. Constitution was ratified, yet the U.S. Army found in 1800 that only 58 percent of its recruits, drawn from the lower strata of the population, were literate.

And then one must ask *how* literate? The evidence is contradictory. The farmers, blacksmiths, tanners, and shopkeepers of colonial America did not need or possess a very sophisticated understanding of written material. For the vast majority, literacy probably meant reading the Bible, almanacs, and occasionally, newspapers, but without necessarily being able to make inferences from their reading or to decipher more complicated texts. Historian Carl F. Kaestle of the University of Wisconsin-Madison estimates that perhaps 20 percent of adult male Americans were "sophisticated readers" by the 1760s.

Heeding James Madison

Lawrence A. Cremin of Columbia University takes a more generous view. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, he notes, "sold a hundred thousand copies within three months of its appearance [in 1776] and possibly as many as a half million in all. That means that one-fifth of the colonial population bought it and a half or more probably read it or heard it read aloud."

"A people who mean to be their own governors," James Madison declared, "must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives."

About one thing there is no doubt. From the start, Americans, for various reasons, *valued* the ability to read and write. "A people who mean to be their own governors," James Madison declared, "must arm themselves with the power knowledge gives. A popular government without popular information or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy, or perhaps both." One Ohio newspaper offered a more mundane rationale in 1839, a variant on the "read to win" theme that nowadays draws thousands of Americans into Evelyn Wood speed-reading courses. A young man who delayed marrying by five years, its editor calculated, would gain 7,300 hours of "mental application," including reading, that would advance his material fortunes later in life. But moral and religious uplift remained the strongest impulse behind the spread of literacy well into the 19th century. As William H. McGuffey warned the young readers of his *Newly Revised Eclectic Second Reader* (1853), "The boys and girls who can not read... will never know whether they are on the right road [in life] or the wrong one."

No More Bare Bones

Almost by accident, America's industrialization during the 19th century helped boost literacy rates. Employers in the United States, as in Europe, preferred to hire factory workers who could read and write: These skills were not always needed on the job, but businessmen believed, not unlike John Cotton, that graduates were superior in "moral character" to their unschooled and unlettered peers. Advocates of public education such as Horace Mann of Massachusetts emphasized primary-school graduates' "greater docility and quickness in applying themselves to work" in arguing for an expansion of schooling. Mann and his allies had their way in part because the growth of densely populated cities and factory towns in New England during the 1830s and '40s made mass schooling more economical.*

In 1840, when the U.S. Census Bureau first asked adults whether they were literate, all but nine percent said Yes. By 1860, only seven percent admitted to illiteracy. The U.S. Army's records tell another story: They show 35 percent illiteracy among recruits in 1840, declining to seven percent only in 1880. Schooling was showing its effects.

It was the U. S. Army that delivered the first shock to the believers in a literate America.

Or so it seemed. It was the U. S. Army that delivered the first shock to the believers in a literate America. By 1917, when the United States mobilized for World War I, the Army had a new way to test the competence of draftees and recruits: standardized intelligence tests, developed by psychologist Robert Yerkes. Yerkes was astonished to find that 30 percent of the young men, while ostensibly literate, could not read well enough to understand his Alpha test form. Public reaction was muted by the fact that many of the near-illiterates were Southern blacks, hence ill-schooled, but the stage had been set in America for a new definition of literacy.

Already the "old bare bones" notion of literacy as a matter of knowing your ABCs and the Bible had been stretched. At Ellis Island, more and more immigrants were arriving from the poor countries of Southern Europe, illiterate in their own languages, not to mention English. More than ever, the newcomers were also unfamiliar with the workings of democracy. Only then did the nation's political leaders begin to view the Founding Fathers' call for an informed citizenry, literate in

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* As before, Massachusetts led the way. It had established the first common schools in 1647, but it was not until 1800 that the state allowed local school districts to levy taxes. Most of the existing states followed suit by the time of the Civil War. Compulsory attendance was slower in coming. Massachusetts was the pioneer again, requiring as early as 1852 that parents send their children to school; more than 50 years passed before Mississippi made compulsory education universal. Because schooling was co-educational, the male-female literacy gap quickly closed.

English, as a social imperative. "There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism," former President Theodore Roosevelt warned in 1915. And steel magnate Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919), convinced that free libraries were "the best agencies for improving the masses of people," dipped into his vast fortune to help create 2,500 new public libraries.

President Herbert C. Hoover launched a U.S. Advisory Committee on National Illiteracy in 1929 to study and publicize the problem, but, like Hoover himself, it was swamped by the Great Depression. And with "one-third of a nation" ill-fed and ill-clad, more important matters filled Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal agenda. It took another world war to bring illiteracy back to the forefront. Early in 1941, before Pearl Harbor, the Army declared that it would reject draftees who failed a fourth-grade equivalency test; within a year, 433,000 men otherwise fit for duty were in civvies thanks to the test. In the summer of 1942, the Army relented, deciding that any illiterate who could understand spoken English and follow basic oral instructions was good enough to wear khaki and serve under the flag.

27 Million Functional Illiterates?

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Only during the past two decades has adult illiteracy aroused the sustained public concern in peacetime.

Only during the past two decades has adult illiteracy aroused the sustained public concern in peacetime. "Adult literacy seems to present an ever growing challenge," writes Harvard's Jeanne S. Chall, "greater perhaps than the acknowledged challenge of literacy among those still in school."

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that the number of *functional* illiterates grows by 2.3. million every year: some 1.3 million legal and illegal immigrants, 850,000 high school dropouts, and another 150,000 "pushouts" who graduate with inadequate reading and writing skills.

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* A dissatisfied Flesch published *Why Johnny Still Can't Read* in 1981, charging that educators are still ignoring phonics. But most U.S. schools today use a mixture of phonics and look-say instruction.

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After World War II, attention shifted to children's ability to read and write. Rudolf Flesch, an emigre writer and education specialist, designed the first modern "readability" formulas that made it possible to gauge the level of reading ability required by children's textbooks. By measuring the length of words and sentences, Flesch could determine whether they were written for comprehension at a fourth-, fifth-, or sixth-grade level. In 1955, he authored *Why Johnny Can't Read*, a best seller that sparked a debate between advocates of instruction in phonics ("sounding out" words letter-by-letter) and the prevailing "look-say" method (recognizing whole words) that continues today.* Look-say not only sounded Chinese but required students to learn English (by memorizing whole words) as if it *were* Chinese. "Do you know," Flesch declared, "that the teaching of reading never was a problem anywhere in the world until the United States switched to the present method?"

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Only during the past two decades has adult illiteracy aroused the sustained public concern in peacetime. "Adult literacy seems to present an ever growing challenge," writes Harvard's Jeanne S. Chall, "greater perhaps than the acknowledged challenge of literacy among those still in school."

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that the number of *functional* illiterates grows by 2.3. million every year: some 1.3 million legal and illegal immigrants, 850,000 high school dropouts, and another 150,000 "pushouts" who graduate with inadequate reading and writing skills.

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* A dissatisfied Flesch published *Why Johnny Still Can't Read* in 1981, charging that educators are still ignoring phonics. But most U.S. schools today use a mixture of phonics and look-say instruction.

are blameless. According to the NAEP, one million children between the ages of 12 and 17 now read below a fourth-grade level. Among minority groups, the problems are more severe: 41 percent of black 17-year-olds (and eight percent of their white peers) are functionally illiterate, hence not likely to escape from the underclass.

There are signs everywhere that such data understate the extent of the problem, that many more youths—white, black, and Hispanic—do not read well enough to make their own way in American society. Of nearly 1,400 colleges and universities surveyed recently, 84 percent had found it necessary to create remedial reading, writing, and math programs. Big Business spends millions of dollars every year on "job training," often merely a euphemism for "bone head" English courses. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company bankrolls $6 million worth of remedial education for 14,000 employees. The Polaroid Corporation teaches engineers bound for management positions how to read nontechnical material. "They never learned to scan. They don't know you can read a newspaper differently from a book or that you can read just *parts* of a book," said a company official.

Reading Jane Fonda

Most high school seniors can probably "decode" Time, but one wonders how much of it they understand.

Mastering the technique of reading is no guarantee of understanding the substance of what is read. That requires *cultural* literacy. Most high school seniors can probably "decode" *Time*, but one wonders how much of it they understand. A 1985 study of 17-year-olds by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) found that one-half did not recognize the names of Josef Stalin or Winston Churchill. One-third could not point to "Great Britain, *or* France, *or* West Germany, *on a map of Europe*." The NEH did not ask its young subjects whether they knew who Mikhail S. Gorbachev and Margaret Thatcher were, but chances are that the answers would have been discouraging. Daily newspaper circulation has remained stagnant at about 62 million copies since 1970, while the nation's population has grown. At least one-fourth of America's 86 million households appear to go without a newspaper.

U.S. book publishers are selling more books per capita than ever before—output totals 3.5 million copies daily—but if Jane Fonda's best-selling *Workout Book* is any guide, not many of these exercise the mind very much. The book trade's biggest sellers overall—the Gothic novels and mysteries and romances sold in drugstores and supermarkets—are mostly written at a seventh- or eighth-grade level.

Even with this wide selection of light fare, 29 percent of all 16- to 21-year-olds, according to a survey by the Book Industry Study Group, say that they do not read books at all.

Along with functional illiterates such "aliterates" do manage to scrape by. Most are gainfully employed, active members of society, even if their lives are complicated or their futures dimmed. *Glamour* magazine recently reported the case of a successful 29-year-old real estate broker hampered by an eighth-grade reading ability. "I'm constantly with customers who use words that go over my head. I often have to ask them to expand on what they just said. If I can't manipulate them into saying things in words I understand, I'm lost." Her fiance helped her read letters and contracts.

"You have to be careful not to get into situations where it would leak out or be with people that would—ah—make it show," said an illiterate Vermont farmer. "You always try to act intelligent, act like you knew everything.....If somebody give something to read, you make believe you read it and you must make out like you knew everything that there was on there ...and most of the time you could. It's kinda like show biz."

"Illiterates become the greatest actors in the world," noted Arthur Colby, president of Literacy Volunteers of America.

Use It or Lose It

Colby's organization is one of many around the country that try to help functional illiterates. But widespread literacy training for civilian adults is a relatively new phenomenon. President Lyndon B. Johnson, calling functional illiteracy "a national tragedy," got Washington involved when he launched the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program in 1964 as part of his Great Society. Today, Washington spends $100 million (matched by $200 million from the states) for several kinds of ABE programs: adult elementary and high school equivalency classes, as well as English as a Second Language instruction. All told, ABE enrolls some 2.6 million adults annually.

In 1970, Commissioner of Education James E. Allen, Jr., launched an ambitious national "Right to Read" effort for illiterates of all ages, but Allen was fired for his public opposition to President Nixon's incursion into Cambodia; his educational "moonshot for the '70s" never really got off the launch pad. In a September 7, 1983, speech marking International Literacy Day, President Reagan called for "a united effort" to eliminate adult functional illiteracy in America. Yet Washington has not chipped in any more money for the effort so far.

The private sector sponsors hundreds of literacy programs. Literacy Volunteers of America (founded in 1962) and Laubach Literacy International (1930) are the two biggest charitable efforts aimed at adult illiterates. They enroll some 75,000 students annually. Community colleges, local public libraries, churches, community-based education and development organizations (with a mixture of private and government support), corporations, and labor unions do substantial work in the field. All told, private and public literacy efforts spend less than $1 billion annually (versus $90 billion for higher education) and reach 4.5 to six million people.

Although perhaps one-fifth of America's adult illiterates enroll in these programs every year (not counting those who need help to climb from an eighth- to a 12th-grade level), many will have to stay in for several years to learn to read and write effectively. Drop-out rates are often very high—over 50 percent in some classes. And among graduates, there is a disturbing tendency to lapse back into illiteracy, as the ability to read and write atrophies from disuse once classes end.

What works? The American military has the longest experience with combating adult illiteracy, and even it has found no magic formulas.

What works? The American military has the longest experience with combating adult illiteracy, and even it has found no magic formulas. The switch to an all-volunteer Army made the search more desperate: From 10 percent in 1975, the proportion of functionally illiterate recruits jumped to 31 percent in 1981. (By 1985, thanks in part to high civilian unemployment that improved the quality of recruits, the rate dropped to nine percent.) The Army achieved its greatest success with efforts like FLIT (Functional Literacy Training)—an intensive six-week course using operating manuals and other written material that soldiers actually need to use in the line of duty.

The Need to Read

The same kind of approach seems to work best in the civilian world. Recently, a New York City Teamsters Union local sponsored a 10-week literacy course for card-carrying municipal exterminators. It focused on teaching the students what they needed to know to pass a certification exam and function in their jobs. Perhaps as important, the teachers were exterminators themselves, peers of the students. The result: few dropouts and a 100 percent success rate on the test for graduates.

Unfortunately, the Teamsters example is the exception rather than the rule. The government's ABE programs and many others typically use middle-class instructors and rather abstract texts. Lower-class students who see few links between what is being taught (using texts like *Memories of East Utica*) and what they consider important (e.g., writing resumes, comparing life insurance policies) often grow discouraged and drop out. Adds McGill University's Rose-Marie Weber, "Teachers [in adult literacy courses] often complain about the students' apparent lack of motivation, their negative attitudes toward learning, and their failure to recognize the long-term value of literacy skills."

Literacy is not just a simple mechanical skill that people can learn and stow away. It is almost a way of life.

Weber's observation suggests why the "all-out literacy war" that some specialists advocate would be unrealistic. Literacy is not just a simple mechanical skill that people can learn and stow away. It is almost a way of life, requiring constant exercise and the acquisition fo new knowledge. The x-ray technician or computer repairman who knows how to read but ignores newspapers and books and turns on the television set when he gets home is not going to achieve or sustain a high level of literacy.

Every generation seems to face its own obstacles to literacy. For the Puritans, one barrier was simply the cost and difficulty of reading by candlelight; for 19th-century Americans, the temptation to leave school to go to work. Today, we lack neither the light nor leisure, and the "need to read" is stronger than ever. At the very least, every citizen ought to be able to learn *how* to read and to acquire the knowledge to know *what* he is reading.

Improving the quality of U.S. public education is an obvious (albeit expensive) first step: There is no logical reason why tax-supported high schools in America should produce graduates who can not read and write at a 12th-grade level. Continuing to do so merely consigns another generation of youths, especially low-income youths, to the bottom rungs of the economic ladder. Federal backing for successful local, "community based" literacy efforts for adults, like those of the Teamsters, San Antonio's Barrio Education Project, and the Bronx Educational Services Program, is also needed. Yet many realities of modern life—the increasing influx of unlettered immigrants, the rising literacy standards, and television's continuing competition with the printed word for American's attention—suggest that functional illiteracy, like the poor, will always be with us.

Teaching is Remembering

by Michael Holtzman

The intercom buzzed.
"Yes?"
"Olga Something on line one."
"Thanks."
It was a few days before the spring final examination for Composition 101. I was in my normal condition for the occasion: exhausted, nervous, and bored. It's hard to maintain all three of these at the same time, but I understand that night nurses and soldiers on guard duty are familiar with the required techniques. Olga Something was a CETA clerk with the County—I thought that was what she said—and wanted me to help with writing there. Oh yes, happy to, but a little busy right now, could you call back in ten days?

The intercom buzzed.
"Yes?"
"That Olga person on line one."
"Really?"
People in Los Angeles don't usually call back when they say they will; it must be the Hollywood influence. Yet here was Olga, right on schedule, calling back on the tenth day. It turned out that she was not a CETA clerk. She was working the California Conservation Corps, Jerry Brown's reincarnation of the Depression era Civilian Conservation Corps. Could she talk with me about teaching the Corpsmembers to write? Sure, the grades were in and I had nearly forgotten about being exhausted, nervous, and bored. I found Irene and Betty and told them that Olga Something would be talking with us the next day, about basic writing, I thought. (Irene Clark is Director of our Writing Center, Betty Bamberg is Director of the USC/California Writing Project—they are among the usual suspects for meetings like this.)

Olga told us that the new CCC employs people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three at the minimum wage on one-year contacts. They clear brush, fight fires, work at emergency sites, are kept to fairly severe work discipline. There are sixty at the Los Angeles Urban Center of the CCC, which happens to be just across the street from USC. Bruce Saito, the Director there, had agreed to include a literacy component in his daily schedule. Half the Corps members were without high school diplomas, one third were Hispanic, ten or so are recent immigrants from South East Asia. Would we teach them how to read and write better?

Oh, sure, nothing better to do, have Mr. Saito send me an official letter. We bureaucrats always want official letters.

After the meeting, Betty said: "Do you know who that was?"

"Ah, didn't she say her name was Olga Connolly?"

"She's the Czech athlete who eloped with an American at the 1956 Olympics."

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Michael Holtzman teaches and works at the Institute for Literacy Studies at Lehman College in Bronx, NY.

I later learned that Olga had stopped competing in the Olympics after her fifth participation in the Games. And she hadn't really eloped. Anyway, she had worked on projects for inner-city youth, worked (indeed) with CETA, and was now a consultant to the California Conservation Corps.

"This is Michael Holtzman." They all stared at me. I'm not used to this sort of thing. Mostly I write memoranda and make speeches to teachers.

The next morning, at 7:30, we went over the the CCC operation, which is housed in an old National Guard Armory. We all admired the high ceilings. Then Bruce found us and took us into the room where the Corpsmembers were. They wore khaki uniforms, sat with their arms folded, stared at us. Olga helped a lot. She said: "This is Michael Holtzman." They all stared at me. I'm not used to this sort of thing. Mostly I write memoranda and make speeches to teachers. "The People" is a nice concept, but hard to face at 7:30 a.m. in the form of dozens of very strong black and brown young adults. The uniforms also did not help. Were they prisoners, soldiers, cops? There was nothing to be done. I talked about how important it is to know how to read and write. Then I asked for questions. Three Corpsmembers asked the same questions: "When do we start?" I could deal with that. We would form small groups and begin writing. Betty gave me a "You could have warned me" look, shrugged, and took eight Corpsmembers off in search of a room with a table. Mr. Saito's letter arrived the following Monday; classes started Tuesday.

Wednesday morning I met Steve Krashen in the park between the Hall of Humanities and the Administration building (this is my usual locale, symbolically). I told him about the CCC. He said: "You're in over your head."

"I know."

"What are you going to do?"

"Round up some good teachers, use small groups—individual tutorials if any of the CCC people turn out to be actually illiterate."

"Let me know how it goes."

"Sure."

We found ten instructors for the sixty CCC people. We put those Corpsmembers who could not speak English into one group (they named themselves "The Internationals"; ESL apparently has a pejorative meaning) and grouped the others at random. During the second meeting we found one person who could only read his own name and the word "the." At the next meeting we found three more. We put two of these students with Irene, two with another instructor, improvised materials. (We actually had some good things on hand that had been developed to help the athletics department.) In the second week of the collaboration between the CCC and our writing instructors something rather odd happened. I didn't understand it at first. It began when twenty of the CCC people had been sent to the Colorado River to sandbag resorts and houses there. That left some of our groups with six students, some with one or two. When I tried to rearrange people, to even out the groups at four, the students resisted. They wanted to stay with their particular instructors. "Wanted" is a mild way of putting it. They refused to be regrouped. I found this a bit annoying, but when the instructors sided with the students there was nothing that I could do about it, no matter how strong my drive toward organization symmetry. I decided to make the best of a bad deal and went off to think about the meaning of this resistance. Just calling it "resistance" made me feel better; it sounded vaguely clinical, made me feel in intellectual if not bureaucratic control of the matter.

The next day I was talking to a secondary-school teacher who specializes in teaching basic reading to students at a high school just off campus, that is, near Watts. I told her about our CCC class and asked how it happened that so many of these young people had been through the public schools but, like her students, had learned little.

"You know," she said, "the classes are so large and the school must do so many different things. And you can't isolate the children from the community. Truancy is such a big problem."

Truancy. Absenteeism. If the students are not in school, they can hardly be taught much.

"At my school the attrition rate is 135% a year. And you hardly ever have more than four or five students in the class three days running. The others come and go."

And, in spite of the best efforts of the teachers, they are forgotten. The teachers, naturally enough (with five classes of thirty or forty students each day), concentrate on the students who are there, not those who are absent. When does this start? At the beginning. We like to believe that in the United States every eight year old is free to go to school. This is true for students from Watts and for students from Beverly Hills. All have equal opportunities. Some have home environments which encourage schooling; some have home environments which are indifferent to it; in some home environments unemployment among young adult males is over fifty percent, violence is endemic, twelve year old girls become prostitutes, gangs recruit in the junior high school corridors. By fourth grade matters are sufficiently advanced for the less fortunate children; tracking will take care of the rest. Students who have missed a crucial week or two of work on reading or writing are relegated to less intensively supervised parts of the educational system. They grow bored. They learn little after that. They are forgotten.

Students who have missed a crucial week or two of work on reading or writing are relegated to less intensively supervised parts of the educational system.

Which brought me back to my stubborn CCC students. Their reluctance to be separated from their instructors was not whimsical or arbitrary. They had been forgotten before; they did not wish to be forgotten again. The seemingly arbitrary nature of the their identification with instructors whom they had barely met simply testified to the intensity of their feelings. If Doug Cazort or Judith Rodby knew their names, seemed interested in their lives and education, that was sufficient—it was practically unique in their experience. No wonder that they were unwilling to risk a new organization, risk exposure to a new representative of middle-class society. The evidence of their own experience was that such a new person would not care about them. Why take risks?

It is not necessary to analyze the consequences of neglect from an ethical or humanitarian angle. The economic context will suffice. The most advanced sectors of the industrialized world now are those which produce and distribute not goods but information. In the United States, where these changes are not cushioned or concealed by traditional social structures or consistent state intervention, the result is the obsolescence of entire industries, and, in a movement parallel to that in the beginning of the nineteenth century, of entire categories of workers. Where the development of mass production eliminated the need for skilled craftsperson (weavers, for instance) in favor of unskilled workers and machines, now it is the unskilled and semi-skilled workers who are becoming superfluous. The bottom steps of the social ladder have been sawn off.

Let me give a very recent example of this. A common path for social advancement in the middle part of the twentieth century was through clerical work, the most basic type of which might be taken as that of a bank teller. Even a recent emigrant with basic English skills could stand at a bank corner eight hours a day, accepting deposits, certifying withdrawals. Eventually this might lead to the possibility of the acquisition of other, more complex skills, of other, more highly paid work. In just the last two years many of these positions have been eliminated by the introduction of machines to perform those basic tasks. Very soon, for all practical purposes, there will be no entry level positions for unskilled white collar workers in banking. One can see that similar changes will occur in other service industries. (At one time it was thought that the service industries would employ those "freed" by the disappearance of heavy manufacturing and extraction industries, but this is less and less likely.) From one point of view this is a very good thing indeed. Gradually the white collar equivalent of ditch digging will be eliminated. There will be no need to employ hundreds of thousands of people to spend their days in mindless, repetitive tasks. As heavy earth moving equipment has freed men (for the most part) from one type of physical drudgery, so automated bank tellers, that is, the applications of computing to the service aspects of information transfer, will free women and men from a type of mental drudgery.

The problem here, for a society like ours, is that those menial white collar jobs were a form of education, a preparation for the slightly more interesting work to be encountered elsewhere in the bank, say. As we will probably not be willing to consider one of those north European solutions (such as that which offered the entire last generation of Belgian coal miners early retirement, without regard to age), we have two alternatives: permanent unemployment for those population groups not educationally equipped to find work in the new economy, or more investment in education. The former choice is much more costly than the latter. It involves extensive construction of prisons, epidemic control, unemployment benefits, welfare payments, higher taxes, higher crime rates, shorter lives. There is not much that need be said about the prospect of condemning a large part of the population to marginalization, except, perhaps, to comment on the word itself. What sort of margin is it that contains so much of the human "text" of society? We are talking about a margin only in the sense that these are people at the margins of the attention of those who plan society.

One significant problem which Olga has told me about is that of the disincentives from education for traditionally educationally disadvantaged groups.

One significant problem which Olga has told me about is that of the disincentives from education for traditionally educationally disadvantaged groups. There are already many educational institutions available for those interested in basic education. There are, for instance, high schools, both regular and adult, continuation and trade. There are community colleges. If Rex Johnson or Nguyen duc Tuan wishes to improve his employment opportunities by learning to read and write in English, or by improving those skills from fourth-grade level to a point where they are useful in the emerging information society, all that Johnson or Nguyen need do is enroll in a free or nearly free course. That is all, but, as with elementary education, in some cases it is too much.

Let us think about Johnson for a minute. He was born in Los Angeles nearly twenty years ago. He is black. He grew up in an extended household composed of his mother, grandmother, and a number of brothers, sisters, half-brothers, cousins. (You have heard this story before.) No one he knows has a college degree. There are virtually no books in his house, virtually no reading materials of any kind. None of his friends has a job that required anything more than fourth grade literacy skills (of course, not many people he knows have jobs at all). In fourth grade he missed his week or two of school (a younger sister was ill and had to be looked after, his mother was beat up by the man who had been living with them, there was a gang war in the neighborhood and it was unsafe to go to school). That left him a bit behind on his reading and writing skills, so he was bored for the rest of the year, not understanding the lessons. The teacher tried to help, but there were those thirty-eight other children in the class, many of whom were more in need of personal attention than Rex. Rex never learned much more in school, attended irregularly, became more and more involved with gangs, or simply began drinking and taking drugs. One of his stepfathers had him sent to jail as an incorrigible ("It will do him good"). After that it was hard for him to get jobs, with no skills and a jail record and the habit of not showing up places when he felt like doing something else. How likely is it that Rex, at nineteen, will suddenly decide to go to night school? And if he goes, what is it that he will want to be taught? He already knows how to read and write—ask him.

Olga says that people like Rex live in a world that is at once magical and violent. The violence is real.

Olga says that people like Rex live in a world that is at once magical and violent. The violence is real. They get shot or stabbed as frequently as middle-class people get in automobile accidents. Women in Rex's world get beat up frequently, get pregnant and abandoned, have trouble holding jobs or finishing school. The view that Rex and his friends have of the world that they do not live in, the world they see on television and in the movies, is magical in a pernicious way. In that magical world things are not connected. One day you are a typical high-school student, the next you have a contract from a professional football team. There is a link between this television magic and street violence, a link that makes the magic in a sense believable. It is that in Rex's everyday world the transitions are television sudden, if always negative. One day you are a typical high-school student, the next you are dead. Rex and his friends live in a domestic Third World, one which appears to have been designed by Gabriel Garcia Marquez but has actually been designed by those of us who work in consciousness industries. If life itself is actually so precarious, it is not unreasonable to believe that positive changes also (if they can occur) will be characterized by sudden and inexplicable transformations. If Rex goes to night school, it is more likely that he will wish to study "computers" than reading. Computers are magic. The problem for those who would intervene in this world, benevolently, is to remove the magic, and not just from computers, to reveal the causal links between events. This must be done before any technical education can be accomplished (and I am counting literacy here as a technique, although not invidiously, as I have elsewhere). General knowledge, Olga told us, must precede literacy. If it does not, the acquisition of literacy literally makes no sense. Why read if you believe that it is sheer chance which will either kill you or make you rich?

I think that the very relentlessness of the negatively magical vision of everyday life which possesses Rex and his friends might serve to justify some intervention in the process by which they make their choices. If they are frequently told by television and motion pictures that success in life happens by means of a gun or gratuitous gesture by benevolent millionaires or through the recognition of physical characteristic (not achievements), and they are told by their own senses that failure occurs also without their willing it , by means of random gunfire, arrests, drug impurities, then it is probably not improper for them also to be informed that there are alternatives. That in return for relinquishing the magical explanation of success (or survival), they may find some possibility of survival (or success) through the decidedly non-magical means of education. They have been forgotten by our society, a process of forgetting which is a mode of exclusion. If they are to re-enter society—and not be parasites on it—they must learn that it exists; it must be made non-magical, real.

If they are to re-enter society—and not be parasites on it—they must learn that it exists; it must be made non-magical, real.

This is the purpose of the literacy preparation program that Olga had devised for the CCC. It consists of two areas of education: she (and her friends) tell Rex (and his friends) about the society which is not Hollywood and not Watts. How the water system works. How the stock market works. How a bank works. How the athletic system works (exactly, really, not magically, how one becomes an Olympic or professional athlete). How these matters are connected. And then she has Rex and his friends take an inventory of their own skills, where they can fit into these systems. She asks: "Would you like to be an athlete? What diet do you follow?" And then she teaches them about nutrition. They seem not to have heard about it before, or about simple anatomy, or about the complexities of reproduction. Olga says that "They know nothing about the human body under its skin." This is fairly worrisome, as some already have children, many of whom were born to undernourished mothers (living on widely advertised processed foods: Hostess Ding Dongs for breakfast). Gradually they learn that only part of the world is magical, caught between random violence and fantasy; that the part of the world (our world) that is the source of theirs is not magical at all; there, everything is connected, and, from the point of view of the individual, all these connections begin with literacy.

Olga's approach to the problem of adult illiteracy and semi-literacy showed me that I had been looking in the wrong place for solutions to these problems. I had thought that it was a technical problem, that I would find some procedure that would be applicable. It is not only a procedural problem. Literacy is not a felt need in a magical world. Before we as teachers could apply to them as students the procedures of our professional expertise, they had to become students, and accept us as teachers. The first step is the de-mystification of the world. The second is our willingness to give up the protection of our roles as teachers, to remember each of them as individuals, to agree that our relationships are personal. When I had failed to rebalance the groups, I had learned that in this situation, at the limit of education, teachers are only allowed to be teachers if they are Doug and Betty and the students are Rex and Tran. Relationships between individuals must replace relationships between roles. With such relationships in place, the Corpsmembers *were* learning basic literacy skills, often quite rapidly. Irene reported after three class sessions her illiterate students had progressed from his name and "the" to all three letter words with the vowels "i," "e," and "a." The "Internationals" were talking among themselves in English, which they denied knowing at the beginning of the course.

Literacy is not a felt need in a magical world.

Literacy among unschooled young adults is not entirely a technical problem. It is also, one might say, a motivational problem. One might say that, as one might say that the Civil War was a policy disagreement.

Enrique Valasquez, a recent emigrant from Mexico, had become something of cross between an ethnographer and a native informant, giving me weekly written reports on the progress of Corpsmembers. Some of the black Corpsmembers were pointing out how black dialect features in their writing and asking their instructors how standard English differs. Literacy among unschooled young adults is not entirely a technical problem. It is also, one might say, a motivational problem. One might say that, as one might say that the Civil War was a policy disagreement. They must acquire the motivation to live. Then they can be taught to write better, to read.

We did learn some technical-pedagogical things. About half way through the experimental summer program, Doug Cazort started having his students tape record narratives, then write them down from their recorded "dictation." I thought this was fairly strange at first; our usual procedure with freshmen had been to have them record essays they had already written. Doug explained to me that this reversal was a solution to another problem that we had been worrying about: most of the Corpsmembers, when asked to write an essay, would write perhaps three words and erase two. It is difficult to finish a composition with this technique. They were apparently operating in accordance with a theory that "correctness" and the avoidance of error is the primary aim of writing. Expression and communication were reserved for speech. We had begun by simply telling them that this is not a correct theory, that Derrida, for instance, would point out that it is a typical instance of logocentricism in Western culture, but this had not made much of an impression. Doug (following Steve Krashen's theoretical lead in this) had found a way to smuggle expression and communication, and thus interest, into writing. The Corpsmembers liked to use the tape recorders, liked to *tell* stories, and did not view the inscription of their own dictation as "writing," in the negatively charged sense that the word had for them. Soon people who had difficulty filling half a page with direct composition were filling two or three pages in an hour class session from their own dictation. Fortunately we had readily available a tape laboratory normally used for foreign language instruction. Many of our students began living there during their hours with us. The more advanced verbal students were particularly attracted to, and helped by, this device.

After a few weeks of our summer job, working with the CCC personnel on what was often, and necessarily, a mutual education project (I now know a bit too much about the phenomenology of prison culture), Bruce Saito asked us to continue literacy education for his Corpsmembers during the academic year. I asked if the Corpsmembers themselves wanted this. They did. That left two more questions: Why should a private university do this? And who would pay?

When the question of money comes up, it is my custom to write a letter to the Vice President of the College, Irwin C. Lieb. The letter got me a meeting with Dr. Lieb. He said that although it was clearly a worthwhile project he did not find in my letter any compelling argument that it was a suitable tack for a university. I advanced the claim that if one is aware of a task that should be done that is not being done, and if one is capable of doing it, one should do it. He responded that budgets are limited, and a university is an institution for higher education and research. I offered the information that there are many CCC centers, that if we developed a significant model for literacy work it could be adapted for work with the CCC and similar groups, that little research had been done in this area. He said he would see our development people for the money and that I should see Steve Krashen about the research.

By the time I met with Dr. Lieb, I felt that we had already accomplished something more than a one-shot effort at improving literacy skills for a random group of educationally handicapped young adults. The observation about the rapidity of small group bonding could be attributed to the origins of the disability itself and to a method for overcoming that disability. These poorly educated young people were poorly educated not by chance, but because they had been forgotten by the educational system. Their literacy could be improved if they were remembered, if particular educators cared about them. I believe that here, as with so many matters, psychological and sociological phenomena form a continuum. If Freire was successful in teaching peasants to read and write by presenting the achievement of literacy in a political context, he did so by persuading them that literacy is one component of a tack involving the transformation of their lives as individuals and as individual representatives of a class. Literacy, in the Third World, can become the locus of hope itself. It is highly unlikely that this particular contextualization of literacy can be widely applied in the United States. (There are exceptions—farm workers, for instance.) The relevant application of Freire's technique is to show individuals that their personal welfare can be enhanced by improvements in their literacy. Since this is a personal matter, direct personal involvement is crucial. The pedagogical instantiation of this theory is that of small tutorials, not classes, and a degree of stability in instructor/student relations. The connection with the CCC gave us a stable student population, and we had learned to emphasize the stability of our instructor/student groups.

These poorly educated young people were poorly educated not by chance, but because they had been forgotten by the educational system. Their literacy could be improved if they were remembered.

The use of tape recordings of verbal texts by the students themselves as the basis for composition is probably not novel, nor is it an answer in itself to the technical questions of adult semi-literacy. It is, though, a demonstration of the richness of the teaching environment as the source for technical and theoretical innovation. In our ESL group Judith was able to achieve significant results by helping her students express that which they wished to express—not, "This is a table" but "The CCC makes us work hard." Why learn to say, to write, words which do not matter? As Steve Krashen tells me at least once a week, only university students will put up with the material in most traditional textbooks. Working with young adults who were certainly living in the real world and who, we learned quickly enough, intensely desired to improve their literacy skills, we spend little time with techniques that satisfy us, but not them. We ask the students to help us design the "curriculum"; we ask them to evaluate the Program. We might as well ask; if we do not, they will tell us anyway. It happens to matter to them whether they acquire more survival opportunities.

There are certain skills and resources present in the university not present among the Corpsmembers. These are being assembled by Steve Krashen and others as a research area within our Linguistics Department. Some of the instructors in what has become the USC Model Literacy Project will be graduate students working with Steve on this research. The researchers will learn from the Project; the Project will benefit from the research, and the results, if significant, will be promulgated in the usual ways, particularly by means of the National Writing Project.

We are now generalizing our project for the education of young adults who have not learned what they needed in the schools.

We are now generalizing our project for the education of young adults who have not learned what they needed in the schools and who are not individually motivated to seek out help through established channels. We will work with the local branch of the California Conservation Corps during the 1983-84 academic year to develop this Model Literacy Project that will then be made available to other sites of the California Writing Project and the California Conservation Corps. The CCC will constitute the motivating vehicle for the students, monitoring attendance, etc. The University will provide instructors, classroom space, and some materials. And the USC/California Writing Project will seek to involve public school teachers in this task, drawing on them for their experience with similar students, asking teachers to teach teachers what we find, what must be done. It is, I believe, particularly elementary school teachers who have much to teach and much to learn, in this matter. Perhaps their involvement with Rex and his friends will help us in our efforts to break this cycle, to minimize the amount of forgetting that occurs in schools.

In a way, the CCC connection came as a gift. The more general problem, the more difficult problem, is that of reaching similar young people without an institutional affiliation. Yet if our project was to be more than the literacy component of the California Conservation Corps, if it were indeed to contribute to what I have romantically called "an epidemic of literacy," we have to find a way to go beyond the Corpsmembers to their brothers and sisters. It seemed an insoluble problem to me. I could think of no organization similar to the CCC. What were we to do—recruit on street corners? I had forgotten about Olga. One morning she said: "I've been walking around the neighborhood talking to people about our Project."

> "What happened?"
> "It was interesting. I'm thinking."
> The next day she said: "I'm going to ask the Corpsmembers."
> Stupid of me—who else was an expert on the matter?

They were ahead of us. They had already told their sisters and brothers and cousins and lovers about the Project. Many were eager to attend our classes. The problem had two parts: letting people know about the Project and selecting those appropriate to join. Both these matters had been taken care of by the Corpsmembers themselves. They had told the community about the Project, and they would select new students. They were proud of what they—we—had done together. They would be responsible in choosing their fellow students. (An unworthy thought about the need for expert recruiting personnel enters here and is quickly assisted to a nearby exit. This is not an employment project for professionals.)

That which is in place now is as follows. Persons new to the Project, whether in the CCC component or the open program, first join us in the enterprise of examining the world as a real, non-magical entity where they have a place directly connected to the rest. Then, often simultaneously, they become part of a literacy group of half a dozen or so, including a literacy teacher from the University. The groups meet three times a week for eight weeks, an hour at a time. If they wish they can enroll in

It is a mark of barbarism when a society treats people as if they were things. Things may be forgotten. People must be remembered.

additional eight-week terms. The instructors study with the students, learning what is needed to be learned and taught, learning about the world in which the students live. Then they work together with other researchers to perfect techniques of literacy instruction. A student-teacher ratio of six or eight to one is fairly expensive. However, the context is that of welfare payments of four or five thousand dollars a month for a group that size if they are unemployable because of deficient literacy skills. I believe that is a fairly good cost/benefit ratio, if one wants to talk about cost/benefit ratios. I do not. It is a mark of barbarism when a society treats people as if they were things. Things may be forgotten. People must be remembered.

Four Poets:

Modern Poetry in the Adult Literacy Classroom

by Francis E. Kazemek
and Pat Rigg

As teachers and tutors of adults who are becoming literate, we have been quite concerned with finding materials for these people. Most commercial materials focus on such "functional" literacy skills as reading want ads and filling out job applications (Rigg and Kazemek, 1985), which are restrictive in at least two senses: These materials narrow rather than enlarge a student's view of literacy; and the snippets of language they display are bereft of verve or grace.

We think that poetry offers a gold mine materials for adult literacy students. In this article we describe four poets whose work we have used with literacy students, and we report on the basic techniques of using poetry.

Why poetry?

There are several reasons for using poetry with adult literacy students. First, it opens a world, or a view of the world, that has been closed for many of them. Our adult students tell us that the written assignments they had in school were always what Britton (1982) calls *transactional*, that is, using language to get something done. Typical assignments were filling in the blanks, underlining subjects and verbs, and drawing lines from words in a list to definitions in a parallel column. Sometimes they wrote book reports, and at least once a year a report on their summer vacation; but these assignments too were transactional.

The reading materials they typically handled were either content area textbooks, rewritten and simplified versions of literature, or short stories and texts written for the "reluctant reader." Because the adults we work with had low grades in English classes, they were never assigned to the higher track nor given creative writing assignments and really good literature.

As a result, many of our students expect to use reading and writing to get better jobs or look better in their children's eyes when they help them with homework assignments, but they don't see literature that they read or write as doing what Gardner says it can: "True art clarifies life, establishes models of human action, casts nets towards the future, carefully judges our right and our wrong directions, celebrates and mourns" (1978, p.100).

Reading and writing poetry opens our students' eyes to what literacy can mean; it helps them see the difference between knowing *how* to read and *wanting* to read to understand themselves and their world better.

A second reason for using poetry with adults, as an obvious corollary to the first , is that the material intrinsically motivates reading, writing, and talking with others in

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Francis E. Kazemek teaches on the Department of Education at Eastern Washington University at Cheney. Pat Rigg is a consultant with American Language and Literacy in Spokane, Washington.

and out of class. When adults use language in what Britton calls the *poetic* mode, they are able to "take it up as it were in the role of spectators" (1982, p. 37). They are able to observe and explore their own past lives, imagined futures, and to dream of impossible events. Poetry allows adults to participate through metaphor, dream, makebelieve, and symbolism skillfully used in that which makes human life an intellectual and imaginative adventure.

A third reason for using poetry with adults who are beginning to read and write is that, if carefully selected, poetry is easy to read and write, often easier than the practice job applications in the literacy textbook (Weibel, 1983). The ideas and images of poems are readily accessible to adults, or can be if the poetry is chosen to fit the students.

Characteristics to look for

Poetry for adult beginning readers and writers is easier to read when it is predictable, both in ideas and form. Poetry which connects in some real way to the adult's life—poetry which, as Emily Dickinson said, makes one feel as though one's head will explode—will be much easier to read than the poetry that does not. Poetry that deals with familiar themes or ideas, has clearly developed patterns and sequences, uses repeated words, phrases, or lines, and employs an identifiable rhythm or meter (not necessarily rhyme) is generally easiest to read.

Poetry written in familiar language or in a vernacular is usually easier than poems in stilted or archaic "literary" language. Rhymed poetry is often the only kind that many adults consider to be real poetry. Yet rhyme is not necessarily an element of predictability; the use of a particular rhyme scheme often results in unusual diction or twisted, unnatural syntax. Any rhymed poetry therefore needs close examination before it is used in the literacy classroom.

Four poets

Here we briefly discuss four poets, much of whose work can be used with adults at all levels of literacy development. Carl Sandburg, Lucille Clifton, William Carlos Williams, and Langston Hughes are all American and all contemporary. We have selected them as models because of their genius with language, their wide range of themes and ideas, and because their work is readily available, relatively inexpensive in paperback, and in most libraries.

We hope, of course that reading their poems leads to further exploration of other poets' work.

Carl Sandburg

Sandburg's poetry is rooted in the commonplace; he writes of everyday themes and everyday people. The colloquial language of his poems has a rhythmical vitality. Often they sound like the people who, Sandburg said, "sometimes talk like poetry without writing it, but they don't know they are talking poetry" (1958, p.14). Sandburg's humor, wit, and frequent irony all help to make his poetry especially appropriate for use with adults. Let's look at a poem from *Early Moon* (1958, p. 45) an inexpensive paperback selection of Sandburg's poetry.

Buffalo Dusk

The buffaloes are gone.
And those who saw the buffaloes are
 gone.
Those who saw the buffaloes by
 thousand and how they pawed
 the prairie sod into dust with
 their hoofs, their great heads down
 pawing on in a great pageant of dusk
Those who saw the buffaloes are gone.
And the buffaloes are gone.

(From *Smoke and Steel* by Carl Sandburg, c 1920 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.; renewed 1948 by C. Sandburg. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

This elegiac poem captures the sense of irretrievable loss that comes with understanding that a particular creature and, indeed, an entire way of life are no more. Sandburg's use of simple but eloquent repetition heightens the underlying pathos of the poem. Every adult has longed for a time that is no more; this poem speaks to that longing.

The theme of "Buffalo Dusk" can elicit a wide range of response and discussion, from a political exploration of the past and present plight of Native Americans, to a consideration of some more personal loss. The language helps make this poem predictable, both in its vividness and in its repetition.

In another poem in the same collection (p. 97), Sandburg explores the nature of fame and power:

Soup

I saw a famous man eating soup.
I say he was lifting a fat broth
Into his mouth with a spoon.
His name was in the newspapers that day
Spelled out in tall black headlines
And thousands of people were talking
 about him.

When I saw him
He sat bending his head over a plate
Putting soup in his mouth with a spoon.

(From *Smoke and Steel* by Carl Sandburg, c 1920 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.; renewed 1948 by C. Sandburg. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.)

The simple declarative language and syntax of "Soup" makes it readily accessible to even the beginning reader. The theme is sure to engender discussion of the lives of the rich and famous. Literacy teachers and students can use this poem as a catalyst for further exploration of power, fame, and everyday life.

Lucille Clifton

A quite different collection of poetry is *two-headed woman (1980)* by Lucille Clifton, poet and author of many children's books. In this particular collection, Clifton celebrates the joys, beauty, pain, and love of being a woman, a Black woman in particular. She speaks as a mother, a daughter, a lover, and a person deeply concerned with spiritual and religious questions. While her poetry will appeal to most people, it speaks most directly to women because of its themes and celebrations of womanhood. In "homage to my hips" (p. 6), for example, Clifton sings of her big, powerful hips with a gusto that swings the poem off the page and readers off their feet.

these hips are big hips.
they need space to
move around in.
they don't fit into little
petty places. these hips
are free hips.
they don't like to be held back
these hips have never been enslaved,
they go where they want to go
they do what they want to do.
these hips are mighty hips.
these hips are magic hips.
I have known them
to put a spell on a man and
spin him like a top!

[Reprinted from *two-headed woman* by Lucille Clifton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), copyright 1980 by The University of Massachusetts Press. Reprinted by the permission of The University of Massachusetts Press.]

The everyday language and the repetition help to make this poem appropriate for many adults, but it is primarily the theme that makes it one literacy students read with ease and eagerness. The sheer celebration of one's body and sexuality gives the poem an energy that moves the reader, and it is this feeling that we want adult beginning readers and writers to experience from the start of their literacy instruction. This poem helps them understand that "being literate is just more fun, more joyful, than being illiterate" (Delattre, 1983, p. 54).

Since writing must be an integral part of literacy instruction (Kazemek, 1984), poems which serve as models for students' own poetry can be especially useful. Clifton's "homage to my hips" can serve as a catalyst for a variety of adult homages to eyes, hands, hair, and so forth. Clifton seems to have been inspired to write a companion piece, "homage to my hair" (p. 5).

homage to my hair

> when I feel her jump up and dance
> i hear the music! my God
> i'm talking about my nappy hair!
> she is a challenge to your hand
> Black man,
> she is as tasty on your tongue as
>   good greens
> Black man,
> she can touch your mind
> with her electric fingers and
> the grayer she do get, good God,
> the Blacker she do be.

[Reprinted from *two-headed woman* by Lucille Clifton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), copyright 1980 by The University of Massachusetts Press. Reprinted by the permission of The University of Massachusetts Press.]

Clifton's poetry doesn't use standard punctuation or grammar. It can help adults appreciate the vitality of language well used and the vigor of dialects; it can also help adults begin to explore conventions of grammar, spelling, and punctuation in print. The rest of the poems in this first rate collection are equally appropriate for use with literacy students.

William Carlos Williams

In his poetry William Carlos Williams tried to capture what he called the "American idiom" — the music and vitality of American speech. Accordingly, many of his poems read like prose that simply has been broken at certain points to give it the look of poetry. But that is only how they look: Those poems that most seem like prose move with a rhythm and sharpness of image that enable the reader and listener to see and feel the world differently, with more clarity and intensity.

Williams was a practicing medical doctor most of his life. Many of his poems are relatively short, like lines jotted between house calls or office visits. This brevity, together with the condensed American speech that Williams used and the everyday nature of his themes, make many of his poems appropriate for adults who are just beginning to see themselves as literate. In his well known "This is just to say," for example, we see how Williams is able to celebrate something as common as plums with a sharpness of imagery and a seeming simplicity of language (1966, p. 33).

> I have eaten
> the plums
> that were in
> the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

(William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems, Volume I: 1909-1939*. Copyright 1938 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation).

We think this poem can be used to show adult literacy students that a famous American poet uses language that is not unlike theirs. It can help them to see the value of everyday language that they hear, use, and understand; it helps take the mystery out of what many adults fear as the most mysterious kind of language—poetry.

Several of Williams's "object" poems can also be used to help adults see how everyday language can help us focus closely and imaginatively on the most common things in life. The poems are demonstrations of using written language to see the world more clearly. "The Red Wheelbarrow" (1966, p. 21) not only makes us see the wheelbarrow but also requires us to consider its significance in the world.

so much depends
upon

a red wheel
barrow

glazed with rain
water

beside the white
chickens.

(William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems, Volume I: 1909-1939*. Copyright 1938 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation).

This kind of object poem lends itself to the exploration and composition of object poems written in class, with both students and teacher writing. Language experience strategies modified for adults can be used quite effectively with this sort of poem (Rigg and Taylor, 1979).

Finally, poems like "The Thing" (1966, p. 50) are appropriate for the kind of language play that we believe is necessary for all beginning readers and writers, whatever their age.

Each time it rings
I think it is for
me but it is
not for me nor for

anyone it merely
rings and we
serve it bitterly
together, they and I

(William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems, Volume I: 1909-1939*. Copyright 1938 by New Directions Publishing Corporation. Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corporation).

This kind of language play—using language for riddles, jokes, interesting juxtapositions, paradoxes, pleasing sound arrangements, and so forth—not only helps the beginning readers and writers feel at home with the language in its written form, but also helps them to better understand its almost infinite possibilities.

Langston Hughes

Langston Hughes was a prolific author and an articulate, impassioned spokesperson for Black people. However, his poetry, stories, plays, and essays, whether they are written in Black English vernacular or in Standard English, have a universal character that makes them meaningful and memorable to both Black and White, young and old.

We believe that Hughes' early poetry, especially the collection *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems* (1959), can be used effectively with most adults to help them appreciate the beauty of his poetry and his skillful use of language. Moreover, Hughes' poetry often inspires exploration and discussion of themes that are important to all of us, such as love, friendship, and ethnic pride. An example is "Poem" (1959, p. 12), one that we like and have successfully used with several adults:

I loved my friend.
He went away from me.
There's nothing more to say.
The poem ends,
Soft as it began—
I loved my friend.

(Langston Hughes, *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*. Copyright 1959 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)

The simple, declarative nature of this poem, the repetition of the line "I loved my friend" and the almost haunting, largely unexplainable pathos that it evokes in most readers all serve to make this a poem that can be used over and over again with adult students. As one of ours remarked, "Yeah, that's just the way it is. That's what happened to me and one of my friends."

"Dreams" (1959, p. 7) appears in numerous anthologies. Although it can be found in basal readers for elementary school students, we think that it is most appropriate for adults who have lost dreams.

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.

Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow

(Langston Hughes, *The Dream Keeper and Other Poems*. Copyright 1959 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)

The images are sharp: Life is a broken-winged bird; life is a barren, frozen field. The two ballad stanzas both state the same cause-effect relationship, so that the repetition of structure as well as of phrases contributes to both its effectiveness and its predictability. This poem leads into class writing, both individual and group collaborative poems.

Hughes is widely known for his prose stories and his narrative poetry, often written in Black English vernacular. His use of dialect shows how important to Hughes is each individual (because he lets each individual speak with his/her own voice) and the individual's life, stories, hopes, and dreams. "Aunt Sue's Stories" (1959, p. 65) begins:

Aunt Sue has a head full of stories.
Aunt Sue has a whole heart full of stories.
Summer nights on the front porch
Aunt Sue cuddles a brown-faced child to
  her bosom
And tells him stories....

(Langston Hughes, *Don't You Turn Back*. Copyright 1959 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.)

Aunt Sue goes on to tell stories of slavery and stories that came "right out of her own life."

All of us have stories that come right out of our own lives. Most of us never get those stories, those lives, on paper, and something important in the world is lost. Adults with a history of failure in school and with reading and writing almost certainly have not even begun to put their stories, their lives, on paper. We believe that poetry like "Aunt Sue's Stories" can get adults to talk, write, and read about their own lives. The oral history and interview techniques demonstrated in *The Foxfire Book* (Wigginton, 1972) and discussed by Rigg (1985) offer the means to get these stories down on paper.

Techniques for using poetry

We have referred throughout this article to poetry writing and have mentioned a few techniques: language experience, oral history, group collaboration. Because we focus on the work of four American poets and how that work is appropriate for adults who are beginning to see themselves as literate people, we will not go into specifics of writing instruction in the literacy setting (See Kazemek, 1984, for suggestions). Three techniques that help adult literacy students read poetry are reading aloud, rereading and discussing.

Reading aloud. If you introduce a poem to your students by reading it aloud yourself, you are doing three things.
(1) You are giving the poetry some of its life that is often hidden when the poem lies flat on its page.
(2) You are making it easy for your students to read the poem when they see the printed copy.
(3) You are spinning a thread between yourself and your students, making a bond.
(3) is as important as (1) and (2).

We talked earlier about how poetry can help us know ourselves, but it can also help us know each other. When we read "homage to my hips" to our students, we let our enjoyment show; when we read Hughes' "Poem" we give it the thoughtful silence afterwards that it deserves. Our students see and hear by the way we read them aloud that the poems speak to us, and that we delight in sharing with our students something that we feel is terribly important and something that we love.

Rereading. We read the poem again, this time while our students have copies in front of them. Why again? Most poetry is tightly packed with expression; unlike reading a newspaper report, we don't get the best of a poem by skimming and scanning. We don't mean that our students plod through line by line. That destroys both the poem and any interest in it that we or our students had.

But rereading a poem that we enjoy two or three times gives us and our students more than one chance for the poem to live for all of us. It's like making a friend: If you give a poem the sort of glance that you give strangers on the street, the poem will stay a stranger, and you won't even remember its face. Rereading also makes the poem more readable for the adults who are just beginning to see themselves as literate people.

Discussion is the third technique we use constantly. After rereading, we often invite comments. We don't try to tell our students what any poem means, since it will mean something different to each person. We have had quite interesting discussions about the poems we've brought to our students that were as intense and intellectually stimulating as any we've sat through in graduate English literature seminars. These discussions came about through our listening to the students' comments, and directing their questions to each other and the group as a whole, rather than trying to answer those questions ourselves.

More readable and more fun

The work of Sandburg, Clifton, Williams and Hughes contains many poems that we believe can be used with adults at all levels of literacy development. (See the accompanying list of other collections of these four poets.)

There is a common assumption that poetry is only for those who have already demonstrated their literacy competency in some way; we believe that this is a misconception. We have used the poems we've mentioned here and many, many others with adults who swore they could not read a single word. The result of our experience is that we strongly believe that this sort of poetry is not only readable by adult beginning students of reading and writing, but it is more readable than many of the commercial materials available. And it's much more fun.

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Resources

ACTION

VISTA and Student Service Learning
806 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20525
Phone: 1-800/ 424-8867 or 202/ 634-9445
Jane Kenny, Director of VISTA and Service Learning

ACTION is an independent Federal agency that operates a series of volunteer programs. Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) is open to anyone 18- 65 years of age can apply to be a VISTA volunteer and receive a stipend to support their work with a local community agency. College service organizations and local volunteer agencies working with students can apply for support from the Student Service Learning Program.

In 1986, a literacy component was established in VISTA through the Domestic Volunteer Service Act Amendments. The purpose of the VISTA Literacy Corps is to alleviate illiteracy through collaboration with community, volunteer, and private sector resources. VISTA volunteers also help to coordinate viable financial and volunteer resources for promoting literacy within the United States. Goals of the program include efforts to increase cooperative arrangements between public and private sectors; to increase public awareness of illiteracy ; and to encourage literacy throughout the United States.

Write to VISTA Literacy Corps for information on program development and funding, tutor training, learner recruitment, and other information pertaining to literacy programs.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE)

Office of Vocational and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education
Room 510, Reporters Building
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202
Phone: 202/ 732-2270
Karl Haigler, Director

As the largest adult basic skills program in the United States, Adult Basic Education (ABE) provides services to adults aged 16 years or older who have completed less than 12 years of school and are not currently enrolled in an education program. The ABE program is group oriented, rather than one-on-one tutoring, and includes both reading and writing instruction as well as basic skills instruction. Through ABE, limited English speakers can participate in ESL training and those with basic skills can work to obtain their GED.

Contact local ABE programs and ask how their work relates to your literacy project: what resources, relative to your program, are available. ABE is a good contact for learners after they have mastered reading skills and are ready to continue their education.

ADULT LITERACY INITIATIVE (ALI)

Federal Office Building (FOB) 6, Room 4145
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202
Phone: 202/ 472-9020
Karl O. Haigler, Director

On September 7, 1983, President Reagan established the Adult Literacy Initiative (ALI) in an effort to focus attention on and to increase awareness of the adult literacy problem in the United States. The goals of ALI are coordination of federal literacy activities, creation of new resources concerning the issues of illiteracy, and promotion of citizen involvement in efforts to diminish illiteracy. ALI encourages involvement of college students, businesses, industry, church groups, and civic organizations to help alleviate the problems caused by illiteracy.

Write to ALI for information regarding this national effort. The information provided will include state program profiles as well as updates on legislation pertaining to the literacy issue.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION (AAACE)

1201 Sixteenth Street, NW, Suite 230
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: 202/ 822-7866
Judy Koloski, Executive Director

A consolidation of the former Adult Education Association and the National Association for Public and Continuing Education, the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) is the national membership association of those interested in and involved with adult education — including literacy volunteers. AAACE produces professional development materials regarding adult education, publishes a newsletter ten times a year as well as a journal eight times a year.

As your program grows, AAACE will become an increasingly valuable source of information. In the early stages of program development, it may prove helpful to obtain information from the national office regarding your state AAACE branch. Also, ask to be put on the AAACE mailing lists, both state and national. Mailings will keep you updated on the progress being made in the field of adult education. AAACE holds an annual state conference which has many workshops on literacy and related topics.

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION TASK FORCE ON LITERACY

1800 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Phone: 202/ 331-2287
Richard P. Lynch, Director

The American Bar Association (ABA) Task Force on Literacy provides state and local bar associations with information on illiteracy and suggests ways lawyers and their associations can provide support to literacy organizations. The Bar Association sponsored Lawyers For Literacy: National Executive Forum in 1987 and has produced a Lawyers For Literacy: A Bar Leadership Manual. Students who are interested in the law or who are in law school can contact the ABA for information and advice.

ASSAULT ON ILLITERACY PROGRAM (AOIP)

410 Central Park West (PH-C)
New York, NY 10025
Phone: 212/ 967-4008

The Assault on Illiteracy Program (AOIP), a coalition of over 90 national Black-led organizations, concerns itself with the literacy problems of the black population, especially those of adults aged 16-24. In their "assault on illiteracy," much emphasis is placed on the reinforcement of positive values and the effort to "uplift and support" the black population. AOIP also reviews and recommends effective materials and methods for motivating and teaching black non-readers. AOIP produces The Missing Link, a training manual for school teachers and volunteer tutors that focuses on how to inspire people to become learners. AOIP also publishes The Advancer, a weekly newspaper insert that appears in black-oriented community newspapers. The fourth-grade level insert includes crossword puzzles, articles on black and Hispanic history, tutor tips and other helpful information for beginning readers and tutors.

AOIP is an excellent resource for programs that are geared toward a minority community. Contact AOIP and ask for information regarding ways in which you can better serve a specific population.

ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION (ACBE)

1806 Vernon Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Phone: 202/ 462-6333
Chris P. Zachariadis, Executive Director
Contact: Joan Eads

The Association for Community Based Education (ACBE), a national association of 20 grassroots organizations, focuses on community involvement with education. Established by the participating organizations, ACBE strives to empower communities to action on their own. The association of these organizations gives them a national voice, whether it be for legislative purposes or in policymaking decisions. In order to become an "associate " of ACBE, an organization must be community based and free standing. Major focuses of ACBE include economic development and literacy issues.

Write ACBE and ask for names of member organizations in or around your area. A number of them may need the tutors your school can provide.

BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR EFFECTIVE LITERACY (BCEL)

1221 Avenue of the Americas, 35th Floor
New York, NY 10020
Phone: 212/ 512-2415 or 2412
Harold W. McGraw, President

The Business Council for Effective Literacy, (BCEL), a publicly supported foundation, was established to augment awareness about functional illiteracy in the United States and to encourage business involvement in the literacy field as well. Major efforts in this area include a newsletter, circulated throughout the country to professionals concerned with the problem of illiteracy. BCEL has a small staff that works with educational and business leaders seeking to strengthen literacy efforts.

Businesses can provide helpful information and even support to your literacy project. Contact BCEL and ask to be placed on their mailing list. The provide excellent materials concerning literacy and the role businesses can play in an effort to promote literacy.

CAMPUS COMPACT: The Project for Public and Community Service

Box 1975
Brown University
Providence, RI 02912
Phone: 401/ 863-1119
Susan Stroud, Director
Melissa Auchard, Literacy Coordinator

Campus Compact: The Project for Public and Community Service is a coalition of college and university presidents established to create public service opportunities for their students and to develop, on a national level, the expectation of service as an integral part of student life. The staff of Campus Compact provides resources and technical assistance to help implement and expand service programs. These services include: regional workshops, site visits to campuses, Stuart matching grants of $10,000 to West Coast institutions, a monthly newsletter, and clearinghouse of collegiate community service programs.

On the national level, Campus Compact staff administers two programs to increase opportunities for student involvement in community service: the Robinson Achievement Award of $1500 which is awarded to five outstanding student humanitarians and the Peace Corps Internship Program, which sends approximately 25 students to work in a developing country for 10-15 weeks. Campus Compact members pursue federal and state policy that encourages student involvement in public service activity while reducing the financial disincentives for doing community service work. Campus Compact members also promote public awareness about the value of civic involvement as part of the college experience through media campaigns.

CAMPUS OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY LEAGUE (COOL)

810 18th Street, NW, Suite 705
Washington, D.C. 20006
Phone: 202/ 783-1582
Wayne Meisel and Robert Hackett, Co-Directors
Louy Meacham, Literacy Director

The Campus Outreach Opportunity League promotes and supports student involvement in community action throughout the country. COOL has established a network and a community of students, staff people and organizations committed to developing strong outreach programs on campus. COOL's staff of recent college graduates provides technical assistance, publishes a newsletter and a resource book with regular updates, hosts an annual national conference and a regular series of local/ state workshops, and works with several national and regional organizations to develop strategies and resources for strengthening a positive student movement based on a commitment to community service.

CARTOONISTS ACROSS AMERICA (CAA)

3908 East 4th Street
Long Beach, CA 90814
Phone: 213/ 438-3424 or 439-4166
Philamer Tambio-Yeh, Contact

Cartoonists Across America (CAA) is a national grassroots organization that has produced a series of bi-monthly comic books promoting literacy. Using their creativity and a heavy dose of humor, Leigh Rubin and Phil Yeh have created a fun approach to the serious issues literacy presents. CAA travels across the country drawing free cartoons and working with schools and literacy organizations to promote reading. They plan to travel and create comic books until the year 2000.

If you would like to have the cartoonists appear in your community write or call them at the above address. The cartoonists' approach to the issue of literacy is unlike most but their purpose is the basically the same, you will enjoy the perspective they offer on the literacy.

COALITION FOR LITERACY

American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312/ 944-6780
Jean Coleman, Director

Created in 1981, the Coalition for Literacy consists of eleven organizations dedicated to promoting literacy in the United States. The Coalition's purpose is to inform U.S. citizens about the problem of illiteracy and to encourage them to take an active role in solving the problem. In January 1985, the Coalition, in conjunction with the Ad Council, launched "Volunteer Against Illiteracy" — a three year media campaign designed to increase national awareness about illiteracy and to recruit volunteer tutors to take part in literacy efforts.

Contact the Coalition for Literacy and ask for information about the organizations involved in this collaborative effort.

COLLEGE WORK-STUDY LITERACY PROJECT

The Adult Literacy Initiative
Room 510, Reporters Building
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202
Phone: 202/ 732-2959
Karl O. Haigler, Director

As part of the Adult Literacy Initiative, the United States Department of Education developed a college work study demonstration program in an effort to foster adult literacy in the United States. Eighteen colleges and universities established adult literacy programs or collaborated with a community literacy program. The schools received increased funding to pay work-study students for their involvement in the literacy programs. Participants in the program report improved community relations as well as new contacts with local service agencies.

If it is possible at your institution, you may want to recruit work-study students for your literacy program. Students can function as tutors, work on development projects, or coordinate activities from the office level. Talk to the work-study coordinator and try to get interested work-study students involved.

CONTACT LITERACY CENTER

c/o Contact Center, Inc.
P.O. Box 81826
Lincoln, NE 68501
Phone: 402/ 464-0602
Rhonda Khadavy, Director of Literacy Services

Founded in 1978 as a project of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, the Contact Literacy Center serves as a clearinghouse for information on the literacy issue. The Center utilizes a toll free telephone hotline in its effort to increase nationwide awareness of adult illiteracy. Also, the CLC has compiled a listing of organizations across the country working to promote literacy.

Use the toll-free number below to obtain information on adult literacy and the efforts being made to promote it. 1-800/228-8813 (in Nebraska, 1-800/228-3225).

DIVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Reporter's Building, Room 522
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5515
Phone: 202/ 732-2276

The Division of Adult Education (DAE) is responsible for providing a wide range of services for adult education and for promoting the development of resources pertaining to adult education. Currently, the DAE administers the federally-funded Adult Education Act (AEA). AEA is the main federal program that provides adults with literacy projects as well as basic education projects. In conjunction with these responsibilities, the DAE formulates policies and programs focusing on the special needs of those adults who lack a high school diploma. The Division also maintains cooperative relations with Federal, state, local, and private educational organizations.

ERIC: Clearinghouse on Adult Career and Vocational Education

1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210
Phone: 614/ 486-3655
Dr. Juliet Miller, Director

ERIC: Clearinghouse on Adult Career and Vocational Education, a federally funded educational data-base, primarily concerns itself with accessing the database for specific information on adult literacy. There are fifteen clearinghouses throughout the United States, each focusing on different aspects of education. The ERIC Clearinghouse collects materials that ordinarily would not be accessible to public/private literacy projects such as conference papers, resource reports, and grant reports.

Consult your university library for help in searching ERIC's resource materials. Contact the Center for further information concerning ERIC's literacy materials.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE LITERACY TRAINING PROGRAM (FELT)

Adult Literacy Initiative
Room 510, Reporters Building
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202
Phone: 202/ 732-2959
Peggy Monihan, Director

The primary purpose of the Federal Employee Literacy Training Program (FELT) program is the recruiting and training of federal employees to act as literacy volunteers. The regional offices have recruited over 1700 employees to participate in the program. Through FELT, volunteers are referred to local literacy councils and are then matched with a student. Peggy Monihan, Director of the FELT program, has put together a "how to" resource book for regional agencies to consult in their efforts to establish literacy programs.

FOUNDATON FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES (FCLD)

99 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016
Phone: 212/ 687-7211
Carrie Rozelle, Director

Founded in 1977 by Carrie Rozelle, the Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities (FCLD) is a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing public *awareness about learning disabilities. Ms. Rozelle established the foundation to help other parents find resources on learning disabilities as well as to provide a source of support and understanding. In Fiscal Year 1977-78, FCLD established a grants program. The goal of the program is to provide funding for programs specifically oriented toward learning disabled children. Among other contributions, FCLE annually produces Their World, a publication for laypersons in the field of learning disabilities.*

Contact FCLD for information regarding programs geared toward learning disabled children. Often, many adult non-readers are learning disabled. FCLD may be able to provide you with information on teaching methods for learning disabled individuals.

JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT (JTPA)

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Washington, D.C. 20210
Phone: 202/ 523-1222

Established under the Reagan Administration, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) ensures job training for economically disadvantaged youth and unskilled adults. Since the Federal Funding for this program is used to prepare persons for jobs, literacy education can, in some cases, provide the foundation necessary for successful training. Persons benefiting from this act may need the services your literacy program offers.

Contact the JTPA and ask for the names of representatives/public officers in your area who are implementing the act. Use the information you receive from your representative as a resource for your recruiting efforts.

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION (IRA)

P.O. Box 8139
800 Barksdale Road
Newark, DE 19714-8139
Phone: 302/ 731-1600
Dr. Ronald Mitchell, Executive Director

Founded in 1956, the International Reading Association (IRA) places primary focus on reading and therefore, is not directly involved with the issue of adult illiteracy. The IRA attempts to improve the instruction of reading at all levels, to encourage people to read, and to promote the development of individuals' reading proficiency. There are approximately 1, 150 autonomous IRA councils nationwide.

Contact the IRA for information concerning reading encouragement and methods of instruction.

LAUBACH LITERACY ACTION (LLA)

1320 Jamesville Avenue
P.O. Box 131
Syracuse, NY 13210
Phone: 315/ 422-9121
Peter Waite, Executive Director

Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) is a national volunteer literacy organization which provides free tutoring for adults. LLA provides volunteer training in reading, tutoring ESL and writing for new readers. New Readers Press, the publishing division of LLA, produces adult learning materials and supplemental books and a weekly newspaper for beginning readers. Tutor training courses provided by certified LLA trainers are recommended for college credit by the American Council on Education.

DIVISION OF LIBRARY PROGRAMS

Office of Educational Research and Improvement
U.S. Department of Education
Room 300
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
Dr. Anne Matthews, Director

Division of Library Programs works with local public libraries that are funded under the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). Under Title I of the Act, each state receives a monetary allocation which is then distributed to libraries throughout the state. Under Title VI of the LSCA, Library Programs gives grants to libraries throughout the country specifically for literacy purposes.

Libraries are one of the most helpful resources you can tap into when trying to establish, develop, and direct a literacy program. Not only do they provide a wealth of reading material, but they may also have an existing literacy program or the means with which to start one. Contact your local library and ask about existing programs or the possibility of collaborating with them to start a program. For grant information, write to the address above for pertinent materials. Contact your local library about the possibility of joining efforts to begin (or continue) a local literacy program.

LITERACY EDUCATION FOR THE ELDERLY PROGRAM (LEEP)
National Council on Aging
600 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024
Phone: 202/ 479-1200
Bella Jacobs, Director

The goal of the Literacy Education for the Elderly program (LEEP) is to bring literacy education to older adults. Elderly persons are trained as tutors and then provide reading instruction as well as peer support to the older learners. Although LEEP's primary purpose is founded in literacy education, the program is currently attempting to broaden the interest in literacy by developing new resources as well as networks of existing programs.

Write to the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and ask to be put on the mailing list for updates on this organization's projects and materials. The NCOA has several publications for sale including: Organizing a Literacy Program for Older Adults, Tutoring Older Adults Literacy Programs and Update on Healthy Aging.

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA, INC. (LVA)
Widewaters One Office Building
5795 Widewaters Parkway
Syracuse, NY 13214
Phone: 315/ 445-8000
Jinx Crouch, President

Literacy Volunteers of America, (LVA) is a national, nonprofit organization which works to increase literacy through a network of community volunteer literacy programs. These affiliates provide individualized learner centered instruction in both basic reading and English as a second language for adults and teenagers. More than forty thousand tutors and learners are involved in nearly three hundred programs located in thirty four states.

LVA provides training materials for volunteer tutors and program managers, coordinates and supports the services of its own network, and provides technical assistance to other groups interested in literacy such as adult basic education agencies, correctional facilities, libraries, corporations and public schools.

LITLINE
SpecialNet
2021 K Street, NW, Suite 315
Washington, D.C. 20006
Phone: 202/296-1800

Litline is a national computer-based communications system, designed to process and transmit up-to-the-minute information on adult literacy-related issues. LitLine, one of Adult Literacy Initiative's crucial efforts, operates through SpecialNet, an educationally oriented telecommunications system. The services provided by LitLine include computer conferencing, electronic mail, and electronic bulletin boards. Cost: $25.00 for setup charges and a minimum $15.00 per month use charge.

Membership may be somewhat expensive for a newly established program, but LitLine provides an informative communications service for those interested in literacy issues.

LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN (LCW)
Volunteer Reading Aides (VRA)
2900 Queen Lane
Philadelphia, PA 19129
Phone: 215/ 438-2200
Martha (Marti) Lane, Director

The Lutheran Church Women (LCW) and its Volunteer Reading Aides program (VRA) was developed by Norma Brookhart in 1968. The organization provides program consultation, planning, and training to local communities interested in establishing adult literacy programs. Also, LCW develops reading materials for adult readers. On December 31, 1987, LCW will cease to exist as an autonomous literacy group. It plans to relocate in Chicago and to merge with two other Lutheran churches and incorporate a literacy component into its larger program.

Contact LCW at the number above for information on how their organization can help you in your efforts to develop a literacy program.

NATIONAL ADULT EDUCATION CLEARINGHOUSE (NAEC)
Montclair State College
Center for Continuing Education
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043
Phone: 201/ 893-4353
Frances M. Spinelli, Director

The National Adult Education Clearinghouse (NAEC) has been in operation since 1970. The primary purpose of this organization is to collect materials that can be used [in] continuing education. These include basic reading or math materials as *well as a collection of commercially produced materials designed to aid in the training of educational instructors. Also, the NAEC prints a newsletter to keep those interested abreast of the latest developments or materials in the field of continuing education.*

Although the NAEC is an excellent resource for materials regarding continuing education, it plans to permanently close its doors in July of 1988. If you would like to obtain information from the NAEC, act fast! Contact them as soon as possible and ask for information concerning various educational materials.

PROJECT LITERACY U.S. (ABC/PBS PLUS)

PLUS contacts are:

Project Director
Capital Cities/ABC Inc.
1330 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10019
212/ 887-7227

Project Director
PBS, WQED TV
4802 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412/ 622-1492

Regional coordinators for the Public Television Outreach Alliance are:

Eastern Region:
Beth Mastin............................ 703/ 998-2722

Southern Region
Jan Davis................................ 606/ 233-3000

Pacific Region
Susannah Malarkey............. 206/ 543-5137

Central Region
Roselle Kovitz...................... 402/ 472-3611 x 264

Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) is a major media outreach campaign spearheaded by ABC and PBS. The two networks have combined resources to help raise awareness of the problem of illiteracy in the United States. News shows and features, documentaries, made-for-TV movies as well as prime time shows and soap operas deal with the subject of illiteracy on a regular basis. In addition to programming to raise awareness, ABC and PBS are acting as task forces have been organized and are working now to meet the demand for tutoring and information that PLUS has stimulated.

Contact the nearest regional coordinator (see listings above) for more information about the PLUS task force in your area.

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL (RIF)

600 Maryland Avenue, SW, Suite 500
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560
Phone: 202/ 287-3220

Founded in 1966 by Margaret S. McNamara, Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution. The primary objective of RIF is to encourage and enable children to read by providing them with books. As the largest reading motivation program in the United States, RIF works through local programs bringing books to children and young people throughout the nation. It should be emphasized that RIF DOES NOT provide books for the programs. Rather, publishers, distributors, corporations, and other organizations donate the materials or funds to cover the book costs. "Children who read grow up to become adults who can read." With this basic philosophy, RIF's efforts to encourage children to read lay the foundation for literate adults of the future.

Contact RIF for materials regarding their program. The information they provide may prove helpful to your efforts in promoting reader motivation.

URBAN LITERACY DEVELOPMENT FUND

7505 Metro Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55435
Phone: 612/ 893-7661

The purpose of the Urban Literacy Development Fund is to provide grants, communication, training and advocacy in support of literacy efforts in urban areas. The focus of the Fund is better utilization of existing and generation of new public and private resources for literacy in urban areas. The Fund has two tracks - a national network and a grants program.

WASHINGTON EDUCATION PROJECT (WEP)

224 Third Street, SE
Washington, D.C. 20003
Phone: 202/ 543-3500 or 202/ 547-3011
Norman Manasa, Director

Based on a program initiated in 1969 by Norman Manasa, the Washington Education Project (WEP) encourages college undergraduates to actively promote adult literacy. Mr. Manasa has designed a literacy project for interested colleges and universities to adopt as part of their standard curriculum. The project, which is actually a course, is structured to give students a learning experience outside of the classroom while they earn college credits and contribute to the community.

Contact the WEP for information on the project as well as advice about developing and establishing a literacy project for college students.

YOUTH POLICY INSTITUTE (YPI)
Cardinal Station
Washington, D.C. 20064
Phone: 202/ 635-6087
David L. Hackett, Executive Director

The Youth Policy Institute (YPI) is a research center that monitors national youth policy and other issues like literacy and basic skills that concern or impact youth. YPI is staffed by high school and college-age interns. Interns work along with the full-time staff to publish two monthly magazines, Youth Policy and American Family, and a bi-weekly Student Press Service News Report. If you are and student interested in a journalism or public policy internship during the summer of year-off, send a resume, cover letter, and writing sample to YPI.

YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA (YSA)
810 18th Street, NW, Suite 705
Washington, D.C. 20006
Phone: 202/ 783-8855
Roger Landrum and Frank Slobig, Co-Directors

Youth Service America (YSA) seeks to help make service a universal experience among America's youth of all backgrounds. Its intent is to create better citizens for America's future and more effectively meet some of the country's pressing needs. YSA provides technical assistance to emerging programs, publishes a newsletter, provides an informational and policy guidance network and promotes mission-oriented programming of youth service to the elderly and academically at-risk children.

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Update Page

We would like to know who you are and what you are doing. We'd like your ideas and opinions. To add a program to the list of profiles or to share information and ideas, please fill out this form and send it to the COOL at the address listed below.

Name:

Organization or Institution:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Telephone:

Description of program:

Comments about or suggestions for *Literacy Action*:

Mail to:
Louisa Meacham
Campus Outreach Opportunity League
810 18th Street, N.W., Suite 705
Washington, D.C. 20006